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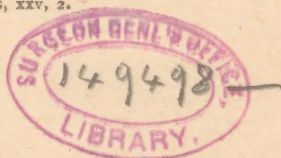
*The Occult Causes of Apparent Death,
Trance and Catalepsy*

BY

FRANZ HARTMANN, M. D.

"The appearance of decomposition is the only reliable proof that the vital energy has departed from an organism."—HUFELAND.

"It is the glory of God to conceal a thing; but the honor of kings is to search out a matter."—PROVERBS, XXV, 2.



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PREFACE.

I AM not writing a book for the purpose of converting science, but for converting ignorance. I have all possible respect for the true scientists who, while utilizing the knowledge which has been arrived at during the past, do not become petrified in the narrow grooves of the past, but seek for more light and more truth, independent of orthodox doctrines that have been or may still be looked upon by some as the ultimate dictates of science; but I have no regard whatever for the conceit of that class of so-called scientists, whose only wisdom consists of the dreams which they have found described in their accepted orthodox books and of the authorized theories with which they have crammed and obstructed their brains, while they refuse to open their own eyes and to look deeper into the mysteries of nature or to listen to anything that goes beyond the scope of that system which has been taught to them in their schools. We must not confound Science with those persons who, incapable of thinking independently, pose before the public as the representatives of all human knowledge, whose pretensions are bolstered up by diplomas and supported by titles, but who in reality are only the representatives of the nar-

rowness of our age and the conservatism of its ignorance. Real science makes no mistakes; all mistakes spring from insufficient knowledge or misconception of facts; the real scientist does not refuse to grasp the truth wherever he finds it; but the learned fool pool-poohs that which he does not already know.

I have been asked to write a book on apparent death, with its only too frequently occurring consequences of premature burial, and to write it from the point of view of modern medical science, keeping within the bounds of the theories already accepted in that system, so as to make it acceptable to all my colleagues. Such a book could not possibly contain anything new, but only that which is already known to everybody and universally admitted and which is not in contradiction with any of the already existing superficial views of modern medical science, however erroneous those theories may be. Such a book would undoubtedly be well received by the profession, which means to say that the learned but narrow-sighted critic would find no fault with it, but acquiesce in its contents and put it into his library where it would be quickly forgotten.

There is much talk among scientists about the exactitude of their science; but a science that judges merely by appearances can never be exact except as to the mere appearance of things. If we wish to go beyond the illusions created by external appearances, we must rise a step higher and look into the hidden causes of those appearances, which causes are called *occult*: because they are higher than the realm of the sensual perception and we cannot see them as long as we remain ourselves at the foot of the ladder that leads to the higher planes

of thought; only as we ourselves grow up in truth will our mental horizon expand, and having arrived at the summit, things which are hidden from those who live in the darkness of the valley, will become clear to our understanding in the light of eternal truth. Thus what is called "occult science" is an exact science to those who have attained a deeper penetration into the hidden mysteries than can be attained by the material sight of nature; while even the most common experiences are occult to those who know nothing about them by their own experience, but merely read of them in their books.

Among the many occurrences of everyday life and of which as yet very little is generally known, are the phenomena of consciousness, of life and of death. As long as we do not know anything about their real nature, we have no right to say that a person is dead when the principle of life has ceased to manifest its activity in a human body; we can only say that such a person *appears* to be dead, and appearances are often delusive. This unfortunate circumstance, far more frequently than is commonly supposed, causes people to be buried alive, especially in countries in which no legal provision is made for public chambers for the dead or for the retention of the supposed corpses until the signs of putrefaction, the only true and infallible signs by which it may be known that the soul and the life have left forever the physical form, have made their appearance. The occurrence of these cases of supposed death, and the awakening to consciousness after having been buried in a coffin, is a thing so horrible to contemplate that human nature revolts against a belief in its probability; and a

certain class of the medical profession, highly impressed with the supposed infallibility of their own judgment, have denied its possibility, explaining the contortions in which corpses have been found in coffins as being due to the jolting of the hearse on the way to the cemetery. In this explanation the attending circumstances, such as the torn and dishevelled hair, the torn shroud, the marks of teeth upon the shoulders and arms, the expression of despair left upon the face by the struggle for breath, etc., are left entirely out of consideration as unsuitable for supporting the theory.

It is high time that this subject should receive the attention which it deserves; and I therefore address myself to the people whose interest it is to protect themselves against the horrible fate of becoming victims of medical shortsightedness by being buried, embalmed, dissected or cremated alive, or frozen to death by being put upon ice; and I also appeal to those members of the medical profession who are not hide-bound by narrow creeds, falsely termed "scientific," but who are capable of doing their own thinking, fearless of the ridicule of fools, and desirous of employing their knowledge for the benefit of humanity.

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BURIED ALIVE.

REPORTED CASES OF PREMATURE BURIAL.

It is often exceedingly difficult to ascertain with accuracy all the details of a case in which a person is discovered to have been buried alive and to have awakened afterwards in his grave ; but the importance which is attributed by some to the accuracy of such details is entirely fanciful and is not recognized in regard to other affairs. Thus, if we read of a railroad accident in which the engine-driver has broken an arm, it would not disprove the possibility of such accidents if it were afterwards found out that the statement was inaccurate and that instead of an arm his leg had been broken. Thus, whether the accounts given below are all correct in all their details or not, is of little importance ; they are sufficiently substantiated to show that such events can take place and do take place oftener than is generally supposed.

I.

A correspondent in the *Banner of Light* says:

“BURIED ALIVE. — What an unspeakable horror! How many people are buried alive! From the number accidentally, by the merest chance, saved from this horrible fate after they have been placed in coffins, we may, yes, *must* infer that far more are put down under several feet of earth to slowly recover amid eternal silence and darkness their full senses. And then — oh, then! — the struggles, the awful, slow suffocation! How careless, how childish, thoughtless we are on some things of custom. What takes place around the couch of the supposed deceased? Hasty preparations for putting *it* away, out of sight, by those who are so sure real death has occurred that nothing but forcible resistance by the body could make them think otherwise. No one dreams of doubting it, save in some very exceptional cases. Only a few years ago a young girl of St. Joseph was taken out of her coffin on the way to the cemetery, the procession halting on the street because of the wild insistence of the mother. We believe she is now living, a grown woman. A long account of it was given in the *Herald* at the time.”

II.

[BY TELEGRAPH TO THE HERALD.]

“WHITEHAVEN, PA., July 2, 1893. — A case of suspended animation is reported from Morrison's, three miles west of Whitehaven. The story is to the effect that a young wife died

nine months after being wedded. Her husband became haunted with the belief that she had been buried alive. He eventually lost his mind. To satisfy him, his friends reopened the grave, and to their horror discovered that his supposed hallucination was a terrible reality.

"Your correspondent investigated the matter to-day and found it to be substantially correct. The woman had been buried before natural dissolution had taken place, and the husband became a raving maniac.

"Morrison's is a farming village situated on the western slope of Mount Yeager. Charles Boger's father died two years ago, leaving his son to take care of the farm. The latter, six months later, married Miss Catherine Leader. A year went by, and nothing occurred to mar their existence until one day Mrs. Boger was taken ill. She went to bed, and from it never arose.

"Dr. James Willard, who had been the woman's family physician for years, was in attendance at her bedside, and, while it was not made known to the husband, he made several tests to assure himself that dissolution had actually taken place before he was satisfied. Among those was the "diaphanous" test by holding the hand of the deceased before a strong light. There was no scarlet color visible, and everything went to show that death had really set in naturally.

"After the burial of his wife the shock which Boger had experienced seemed to wear away gradually, until one day some one came to him and told him that previous to their marriage Catherine had been subject to periodic hysteria, and that there was a grave possibility of her having been buried alive.

“The terrible thought that his wife might possibly have been buried alive haunted him night and day, until finally he became a raving maniac. He believed that his wife had been taken from him, and stated again and again that she was alive.

“So strongly did he plead his cause that his friends were finally induced to reopen the grave. Accordingly a dozen of them went to the cemetery, accompanied by the demented husband. During the progress of the digging of the grave he remained perfectly quiet until the coffin was reached. He then became excited, and could hardly be pacified until the lid was removed. The woman had been buried alive; and all the evidences going to prove such a terrible blunder were painfully apparent. The body was turned face downward. The glass in the lid was broken. The robes were torn to shreds, hair dishevelled and flesh torn, showing where the woman had torn herself in the frenzy upon discovering her awful position.”

Such cases are by no means rare; and it is self-evident, that among the great number of premature burials, only a small percentage is thus discovered, because there is generally no cause for opening a grave until the body therein has completely decayed, when all the indications to show that the person has died in the coffin are gone. Nevertheless, occasionally such discoveries are made, either by accident or owing to some rumor or suspicion arising after the burial has taken place.

III.

H. R. Phillips, of 51 East 59th Street, New York City, writes :

“ Nearly everybody has read of the pathetic history of Mollie Fancher, of Brooklyn. She has been confined to her bed for many years, living only on liquids ; is said to be clairvoyant, but refusing to use her powers for any purpose whatsoever. Her brother-in-law was a sea-captain. While absent on one of his long voyages his wife became ill, and died and was buried. On his return something prompted him to have the body exhumed. He was horrified to find from the position of the body and other circumstances, that the poor woman was buried alive. He became insane, and is, or was at last accounts, in an insane asylum.”

IV.

George C. Warren, of Kansas City, Mo., reports the following case :

“ During the terrible scourge of cholera which swept over America and Europe in the year 1860, my grandfather and grandmother fled from Louisville, Ky., to a small place, the home of relatives, at Hopkinsville, Ky., about twenty-five miles away. However, the scourge pursued them, and both died and were buried. Some months afterwards the coffins were disinterred for the purpose of transferring the bodies to Louisville, and it was found that my grandmother had turned over on her side, and there were evidences of a short struggle. The bodies

of my grandparents now rest in an old cemetery at 18th and Jefferson Streets, Louisville, Ky., in their family burial vault."

V.

A still more horrible case is reported in the Vienna papers:

"In the year 1893, there died in a small town in Styria (Austria), a young pregnant woman, and after waiting the customary three days, she was buried in the churchyard. Some days after the burial a rumor was circulated that she had been poisoned by her husband, and the grave was opened by order of the authorities. It was then found that she had but very recently died, and the appearance of her body indicated that she had undergone a terrible struggle. Moreover, she had given birth to a child in her coffin. The physician who had signed her certificate of death was sentenced to a few weeks of imprisonment as a punishment for his carelessness."

There is no truth so great that an ignorant person cannot deny it, but no one needs to go far out of his way to prove to his own satisfaction that cases of premature burial have often occurred and may still occur; for if he merely inquires among the circle of his friends and acquaintances, he will find some that have a sad story to tell. The following are some cases that have occurred in the vicinity of the place where the author of these pages at present temporarily resides:

VI.

In the city of Salzburg there died, some thirty years ago, the wife of one of the most prominent merchants of the town, Mr. Zeller, and was buried on the third day. The funeral took place with great pomp, and the body was deposited in the grave with a costly finger-ring which the lady prized very much during her life. During the night after the funeral, the undertaker's servant, having observed the costly ring, made up his mind to rob the body of it. Armed with the required tools, he went at midnight to the grave and opened it. As he removed the coffin-lid the current of fresh air entering awoke the lady from her state of unconsciousness, and she sat up in her coffin. The grave-robber ran away, and the woman climbing out of the grave walked back in her shroud to her residence, where she rang the bell and created no little consternation among her family upon being admitted.

A large gilded cross has been attached to the outside wall of the house where the lady lived, in commemoration of that event, and may be seen at present by every stranger visiting Salzburg. The house is No. 1, *Dreifaltigkeitsplatz* (Trinity Place).

VII.

A case very similar to the above happened at Kronstadt:

The daughter of a rich merchant at Kronstadt, Mr. Benkner, died after a short sickness, and in the prescribed time she

was put into a coffin that was deposited in the family vault within the cathedral. On the following night two robbers entered the vault for the purpose of robbing the body. After trying in vain to remove some rings from the fingers of the corpse, which were stiff, they proceeded to cut off her hand; but as the first cut was made the girl awoke from her trance. The robbers fled and the girl, finding the door of the cathedral open, went home to her family, her home being the *Kaufhaus* on the market-place, known to everybody there.

VIII.

At the same place another event happened, having a less fortunate ending:

A young and strong man, by the name of Orrendo, fell into a fit and died suddenly. This happened in the year 1866, and he was put into a coffin and deposited in the family vault in a church. Fourteen years afterwards, in 1880, the same vault was opened again for the purpose of admitting another corpse. A horrible sight met those who entered. Orrendo's coffin was empty, and his skeleton lying upon the floor. But the rest of the coffins were also broken open and emptied of their contents. It appears that the man after awakening burst his coffin, became insane and smashed the other boxes, after which he starved to death.

IX.

Still another remarkable case happened at the same locality:

Frederic Herrmann, a papermaker, died at the hospital at Kronstadt in the year 1860. They stripped the body and laid it out on a board in the morgue. During the night the man awoke, and as he stirred he fell down from the board. The noise awoke the guardian of the place, who suspected what had actually taken place, and for the purpose of not revealing to the patient the character of the locality in which he was, he courageously went without a light into the dark room, called to the resurrected man, took him out and put him to bed, after which the patient fully recovered.

X.

At Vienna, some time ago, a man recovered under similar circumstances :

A hotel-waiter at Vienna died at the hospital and was, with some other corpses, deposited in the chamber for the dead, where after some hours he recovered, having been conscious all the time of what was taking place, but unable to give a sign of life.

XI.

At Wels (Austria), a student, while travelling, entered a house for the purpose of asking for a night's lodging. It happened that a person had died there on that day, and the student was invited to join the meal that was served for the purpose of assisting the "wake." During the meal the student watched the corpse and thought that he found some signs of life in it.

In spite of the ridicule of those present he made some attempts to reanimate the body, which were successful, and the patient recovered.

XII.

Not far from the same place a woman was drowned in a river and her body was found. On the day of the funeral when the carriers came to take the body away, they were attacked furiously by the family dog. This caused them to drop the coffin, when the woman came to herself and lived for a long time afterwards in good health.

XIII.

At the village of Merva, near Gorizia, a woman by the name of Scalettari, died in consequence of indigestion. In due time she was buried. On the following day some one passing through the cemetery near the new grave heard cries as if issuing from within the tomb. He reported the case to the police, who caused the grave to be opened, where it was discovered that the woman had just died after a horrible struggle. Her body was still warm, and her arms and face were scratched and bleeding, owing to the vain attempts she had made to free herself.

XIV.

Another case, in which the discovery of the person being alive was fortunately made at the proper

time, happened within a half a mile of where I am writing:

At Oberalm, near Hallein, there died the widow of a Dr. Ettenberger, a lawyer. It was known that she had previously been affected with fits of catalepsy, and therefore all possible means were taken for the purpose of restoring her to life. All, however, was in vain, and her death appeared to be certain. On the third day, just before the hour appointed for the funeral, the family physician, Dr. Leber, bethought himself of trying some experiments with the corpse, when the woman revived and expressed her indignation; because she had been fully conscious all the time and aware of all the preparations that were made for her funeral, although unable to make it known that she was still alive.

XV.

In the year 1856 there died a man in an Hungarian village. It is customary there to dig the graves in a row, one by the side of the other. As the grave-digger was making the grave, he heard some knockings at his side that proceeded from a grave where a few days before a man had been buried. Terrified, he went to the priest, and with the priest to the police. At last permission was granted to open that grave; but by that time the occupant therein had died in reality. The fact that he had been buried alive was made evident by the condition of the body and by the wounds which the man had inflicted upon himself by biting his shoulders and arms.

XVI.

About the year 1885, a young fellow in Asvány (Com. of Raab, Hungary), was executed on the gallows for fourfold murder. After having been pronounced dead by the attending physician, the body was still left hanging for fifteen minutes, when the executioner, Kozaredt, delivered it up. The city physician of Raab, Dr. Sikor, then examined the body, and finding no sign of life, it was put into a box and taken to the city hospital, where Professor Birbauer experimented with it by means of electricity. These experiments were at first without any result; but when they were repeated some hours afterwards, the man revived and called for water. He fully recovered his consciousness, and lived from 11 A. M. to 6 P. M., when he actually died.

XVII.

In the Bukavina, a young woman in the vicinity of Radautz died of spasms of the heart. They waited five days for the funeral, because no signs of putrefaction appeared. The clergyman then refused any longer delay, and the final arrangements for interment were made. Just as they were about to put the coffin into the grave, the sister of the deceased woman, who lived at another place, arrived and begged to be permitted to see the dead body. Owing to her entreaties the coffin was opened, and as the woman saw the unaltered features of her sister, she asserted her belief that the supposed dead was still living. She procured a red-hot poker, and, in spite of the re-

monstrances of those present, she touched with it the soles of the feet of the corpse. There was a spasmodic jerk, and the woman recovered. The most remarkable thing was that the supposed dead woman had not been unconscious for a moment, but was able to describe afterwards all the details of what had taken place around her from the moment when she was supposed to die up to the time of her recovery ; but she had looked upon all that like an unconcerned spectator and not experienced any sensation, nor was she able to give any sign of life.

Those acquainted with the science of life will easily perceive that the above case was one of those in which the soul, which is the seat of life and consciousness, had separated itself from the physical form, without, however, breaking the strong link connecting the two together, as will be explained further on. This unbroken link rendered a return of the (astral) soul and its unification with the physical body possible.

The above are some samples of cases such as the author has been able to collect within a few months in the country where he at present resides ; they are authenticated to a certain extent, in so far as they have been told to him by friends, relatives or descendants of the parties in question, and they will go to show that in the first place cases of people being buried alive do actually take place, and secondly, that they do not occur as seldom as is commonly supposed. The following

are some accounts drawn from German and French medical literature :

XVIII.

In France, there lived in 1620 in the county of Beaujalais, upon the right border of the Saone, a Count of Montreal. His wife was taken with a severe illness, beginning with a fever, and in which spasms and faintings occurred. After a short time she died. Three days afterwards the body of the Countess was deposited in a coffin within the family tomb below the altar in the church of Beaujeu. It was dressed in costly silk, and the head covered with a crown of flowers, while upon one of the fingers was left a ring of great value. The undertaker was a poor man with a family to support, and, driven by poverty, he resolved to put himself in possession of the ring of the corpse. He therefore opened the coffin ; but when he tried to remove the ring, the stiffness of the fingers of the corpse prevented him from accomplishing his purpose. He was about to use his knife and cut the finger, when he felt that the hand of the Countess trembled, and the lady awoke, giving an expression of pain. At this the undertaker ran away, and went directly to the Count, to whom he confessed his crime, informing him that the Countess still lived. The Count, who dearly loved his wife, thereupon went with the undertaker to the church ; but they found the coffin empty and the lady gone. After a while they discovered her in another part of the church. It appears that the Countess, after returning to consciousness, wondered why she was left alone in a dark and cold room.

She therefore arose and went around the steps of the altar. At last she discovered the crown of flowers upon her head and realized her situation. This caused her a new fainting fit, from which she, however, soon recovered, and was taken home by the Count. It need hardly be said that the undertaker received no punishment, as his evil intentions had such a good result.

In this case there was no physical consciousness and no perception of what was taking place during that state. We may therefore consider it as a case of trance in which the soul leaves the body, without, however, breaking its connection with it; while in a state of catalepsy the soul remains with the body, but is unable to exercise any control over it. As such a case of catalepsy the following one may be regarded. It is given among other remarkable cases of premature burial in Dr. Léonce Lénormand's "*Des Inhumations Précipitées.*"

XIX.

In the year 1831, an Englishman died of typhoid fever, and was buried in a grave. On the fourth day after the burial his body was again exhumed and brought into the anatomical museum for the purpose of being dissected. There it was put upon a marble slab, and the professor, after making some experiments with the body, took his knife and made an incision in the breast. At that moment the supposed corpse cried out, and rising up grasped the professor's arm. The man's life had

returned, and he lived for many years afterwards. This Englishman published himself the following statement :

“Owing to long-continued physical exposures I was taken with typhoid fever, which exhausted the rest of my strength. Strange to say, it seemed to me as if my life in gradually leaving my body, were retiring entirely within my mental faculties. Arrived at the extreme point of physical weakness, I felt myself mentally stronger than ever before. The moment of decease arrived, I found myself carried up in a vortex of light, in the midst of which there were many phantastical forms. With all of my power I clung to the life that was about to depart, and soon I lost all sense of being. I do not know how long I remained in that state, when I suddenly awoke to a condition of almost ecstatic tranquillity. At this moment I heard the physician who was approaching my bed, say : ‘All is over!’ He then covered my face with a cloth, and I heard only the sobs of my family. I attempted to speak, but found my tongue clinging immovably to my palate, and my limbs were as if bound by invisible chains, so that I could not make the least movement or sign. On the next day they dressed me for the funeral, and for three days I was exposed upon a bier, while the friends of my family came and offered them their sympathy. I heard and understood everything that was said and knew what was taking place, and from minute to minute I hoped that this unfortunate state which weighed me down would end.

“On the morning of the fourth day they turned me over to the undertakers, who treated me with revolting brutality, and as one of them applied his knees to my breast for the purpose

of forcing me into the coffin, that was somewhat too narrow, I experienced such a cruel torture that for a moment I hoped that the pain would give me the strength to express it. However, they closed the coffin, and soon I heard the crashing of the wood as they drove in the nails in fastening the lid. It is impossible for me to find words suitable to describe my horror and despair. Each stroke of the hammer made my whole frame tremble. Oh, if I could only have cried out, or even given a sigh! But no! While my breast and shoulders were crammed into that narrow box, and while I experienced a sensation as if my head and limbs were being torn asunder, I had to remain motionless and mute. I would never have believed that a heart could suffer so much without breaking. Soon the coffin was taken up and put upon a hearse, and we arrived at the graveyard. At this moment I tried to make one last effort to cry out, but in vain. I felt the knocks of the coffin striking against the walls of the grave as they were letting it down; I heard the slipping of the ropes as they were withdrawn when it rested upon the bottom. The well-known voice of a friend then addressed to me some words of endearment and praise, and I understood every word he said, all of which only caused my despair to increase in this hopeless situation. After the sermon was ended, a thousand thunders clashed around me; it was the earth and the stones thrown down upon my coffin; and as the grave was being filled I thought myself shut out forever from the world of the living. I was buried alive. My hope now was that I would not have to suffer long, and that suffocation would make an end to my horrible situation. I was again disappointed. My lungs were

paralyzed and used no air ; my heart did not beat ; my breast was not moved by any breath ; I could not stir a finger ; and, nevertheless, I lived, for I suffered ; my reason and memory were intact, having lost nothing of their energy.

“For many hours I must have been in that state, when my anguish was interrupted by hearing a noise which came nearer. I knew that my coffin was being exhumed and taken up ; I felt that they opened it, and experienced the sensation of a penetrating coldness. They carried my body for a long distance and finally dropped me upon an ice-cold slab. Soon afterwards I heard the sound of many voices ; hands touched me ; and as it happened that somebody raised the lid of one of my eyes, I saw myself in the amphitheatre of a dissecting-room in the midst of a great number of young students, among whom I recognized two as my comrades in school.

“It was resolved first to galvanize me. They prepared the apparatus, and at the first discharge of electricity it was as if a thousand sparks were dancing before my eyes, and my whole system was shaken. At the second discharge every one of my nerves trembled like the strings of a harp, and my body rose to a sitting posture, with stiff muscles, open and staring eyes. They extended me again, the professor approached and made a light cut through the teguments of my breast. At this moment an enormous change took place in my whole body. I succeeded in crying out, the bonds of death were separated, and I returned to life.”

This case is very instructive, and teaches many a lesson, especially in its psychological aspect. The soul of

that man, the seat of his life and his consciousness was freeing itself from the bonds of the physical form and resting in almost "ecstatic tranquillity," when the desire awoke within of communicating with its friends that surrounded the bed, and this desire drew it back and forged the links that fastened it to the physical body, so that it intermingled again with its physical elements and partook of the sensations of the body rendered sensible by this union with the soul, although it was unable to overcome the resistance of matter offered by the disordered organism, which, for the time being, was beyond the power of control. Whether the account be true or not in all of its details, it goes to illustrate the doctrine of Buddha; that the cause of our descent into material existence, with its consequent misery, is our desire for experiencing that lower existence, and the cause of this desire the non-recognition of our higher celestial state, which is beyond all the suffering to which our terrestrial nature is subject upon this planet.

A dead body, from which the soul has departed, does not suffer pain; neither does the spirit suffer, when freed from the body. It is the soul that endows the body with life and consciousness and with the capacity for suffering pain and experiencing pleasure, and owing to its union with the material body, the unity of spirit, soul and body called "man," experiences the suffering.

"Pooh, pooh!" exclaims the ignoramus, after inform-

ing us that he is a representative of modern science, and that there can be nothing which he does not already know, but whose soul is in a state of catalepsy, and who therefore does not know that he has a soul, or what sort of a thing a soul might be, "how can you prove it?" But the only way to prove the existence of soul is for every one to find his own soul and to partake of the life of the soul and study it within himself.

XX.

Dr. E. Altschuhl writes :

"A young student was brought into the hospital of the university at Prague, suffering from pleuro-pneumonia. The inflammation subsided, but a pleuritic exudation in his chest remained for a long time. One day the patient arose and stepped with bare feet upon the cold floor, when he immediately fell down dead. The attending physicians found the body cold and without any pulse; the pupils dilated and insensible to any stimulus. A venesection was made, but only a small quantity of blood could be obtained. They shaved his head, applied cupping glasses and ice to it and put mustard plasters on his feet; they tried all possible restoratives; the students themselves stayed with the supposed corpse and sought to revive it. All hopes were in vain and the arrangements were made for the funeral; when suddenly and without any apparent cause the dead man awoke exclaiming, 'I — I live!' He had been conscious all the time and heard and understood

all that was said and done in his presence ; he knew all that was taking place and lived in the greatest fear that he would be buried alive."

This case especially goes to show that there is a great difference between the Life or Soul (life energy or life principle) and the activity of that energy becoming manifest in the physical body. The spirit may be compared to the driver of a steam-engine, the soul to the water and fire, the body to the engine. If the engine is out of order, in a state of catalepsy, the power of the steam cannot move it ; but the driver of the engine is not, as some of our would-be " representatives of science " would have it, created by the steam, nor is the steam a product of the construction of the engine, but rather the engine a product of the human intellect represented in the engineer. To the enlightened such comparisons seem absurd, ridiculous and unnecessary ; but there is still a majority among our scientists who are ignorant enough to mistake the soul for a creation of the body, life as a product of dead matter, and the engineer as a mode of motion of the mechanism composing the engine.

There are those in whom the soul is, as it were, in a state of catalepsy, while the body with its physical and intellectual functions is fully alive ; and there are others in whom the soul is alive, while the physical body and the intellectual faculties are in a state of paralysis. We must make a distinction between the life of the soul

and the physical functions of life in the body, which may go on, even if the soul departs to a certain extent from the physical body, as may be observed in cases of trance. The following case offers a good illustration.

XXI.

A young gentleman in France was forced to enter into a clerical order, owing to the ambition of his father. Before taking the final vows he made a voyage, and it happened that he stayed one night at an inn, where he found the host and hostess in great grief because their only daughter, a very beautiful young lady, had died on that very day. The funeral was to take place on the following day, and the young clergyman was asked to watch the corpse during the night and perform the usual prayers. This he did, and having heard so much of the beauty of the girl and being alone with the body, his curiosity induced him to lift the veil from the face of the corpse. What he saw surpassed indeed the height of his imagination, and he was so much struck with the charms of the beautiful corpse, that the fire of passion arose in him, and forgetting his duty and the solemnity of the occasion, he took (so says the French original) certain liberties with the corpse, such as are permitted usually only among living married people. Shame and remorse then stepped in, and he left the house precipitately on the following morning.

On the next day the funeral was to take place, but as the corpse was taken to the grave, movements were noticed within the coffin by those who carried it. They opened the box and

took the lady out; restoratives were applied and the lady recovered. Great was the joy of the parents; but it was sadly interrupted by the discovery which was made a few months afterwards, that their beloved daughter was with child; nor could she give any explanation whatever of the cause of this circumstance. In due time she was delivered of a boy, and thus became an object of gossip for the whole village, so that she finally resolved to hide her shame in a nunnery.

While this was taking place, the father of the young clergyman died and left him a large fortune. The son having become free to act according to his own pleasure, returned to his home and happened to pass again through the same village. There he heard of the result of his previous visit, and the consequence was that he abandoned his clerical career, married the lady and lived with her for a long time a happy husband and father.¹

To the thinking mind there presents itself the question: "Where was the soul of the girl while her body was still alive but in a state of unconsciousness? Where was her consciousness, during her trance?" And the answer which presents itself to those acquainted with occult science is, that it was absorbed into that higher and spiritual consciousness in which no sense of self and separation exists; into that state of freedom in which the spirit having expanded into the infinitude of all-being, takes no notice of what takes place with the instrument which he uses when his attention becomes

¹ Bochut: *Les Signs de la Mort*, p. 17.

again directed to or absorbed by the material plane of existence. Thus we see that a state of trance differs essentially from a state of catalepsy. In the former the soul is free and indifferent in regard to the condition of the body; while in catalepsy the soul is bound to the body but unable to control it owing to disorders existing in the physical organism. A state of trance may be voluntarily entered by those who are able to enter it voluntarily, or the soul may leave the body for reasons unknown; a state of catalepsy is always entered involuntarily, it being the result of some disorder of the nervous system, a state of disease which no one desires to enter, but which is usually due to some exhaustion of the vitality of the nervous system that forms the connecting link between body and soul.

If this is once understood, it will no longer appear incredible that certain fakirs in the East who have learned to know their own soul and its life and become perfect masters over their physical body, may strip off the latter as one would a garment and live outside of it, and that they have, for the sake of teaching the lesson of immortality to the ignorant, permitted their bodies to be buried for weeks and months six feet under the ground, and reanimated their bodies again without having suffered any injury and even without any inconvenience to themselves.

The following are some of such facts well proven and

authenticated and perfectly comprehensible to the student of the higher science; but appearing miraculous, incredible and non-admissible to those "representatives of science" who know nothing beyond the visible plane of illusions which is the only thing real to them.

XXII.

Dr. J. M. Honigberger, a German physician residing in India, gives the following account of a fakir who permitted himself (*resp. his body*) to be buried alive:

"An Indian rajah heard of a fakir whose name was Haridas and who was said to permit himself to be buried for several months at a time, after which he revived again. He sent for the fakir, who expressed himself willing to submit to the experiment, for the purpose of proving that a man's true life was not dependent on the activity of that life in a physical body; but that a man's personality constituted only the house in which the spiritual individuality lived, from which the real man may go out or enter again at will. The fakir was informed that all possible means would be taken to prevent any attempted deception on his part; but to this he agreed, requesting only that his body should be taken care of in such a manner as to protect it against destruction, so that the soul would find it intact on again taking possession of it at the appointed time. He then made certain preparations consisting of filling his ears, nostrils, etc., with wax, so as to prevent the entrance of air, and entered into a state of death-like trance, in which no heart-beat and

not even the presence of a spark of life could be discovered. In the presence of the rajah and his court the apparent corpse was then sewed into a linen bag, and this was sealed with the rajah's own seal, after which the bag with the corpse was put into a box for which the rajah himself provided a lock and kept the key after it was locked. This box was then buried in the garden of one of the ministers of the king; barley was sown in the ground above, the whole enclosed by a wall, and in addition to that military guards were posted there by day and night.

“ On the fortieth day after the burial the box was exhumed in the presence of the rajah, his ministers, General Ventura, and some Englishmen, among whom there was a physician. They found the fakir lying therein stark and stiff like a corpse, in the same condition as when he was buried. Warmth was then applied to his head, the wax removed and air blown into his mouth; after which the body revived, nothing the worse for having undergone this experiment. One of the ministers present declared that he knew of the same fakir's having once been buried for four months. He said that at the time of the burial the fakir had his beard shaved off, and when the exhumation took place, four months afterwards, his chin was still as smooth as at the time of the burial, which goes to show that all the vitality had been withdrawn from the body by the departing soul.”

XXIII.

The *Calcutta Medical Journal* of 1835, gives an account of a similar experiment with a fakir, differing from the above,

however, in so far as it was made by some English residents, who did not put the coffin into the earth but hung it up in the air, so as to protect it from the danger of being eaten up by white ants. There seems to be hardly any limitation in regard to the time during which such a body may be preserved and become reanimated again, provided that it is well protected, although modern ignorance may smile at this statement.

XXIV.

Professor Braid, known as the rediscoverer of what is now called "hypnotism," also gives an account of two similar cases told to him by the English diplomatic agent at the court of Lahore and by an English major :

"Runjeat Singh, the King of Lahore, put two companies of his bodyguards near the place where the fakir was buried, and four sentinels that were relieved every two hours were continually watching the grave. Twice during the time of the experiment the king arrived unexpectedly and ordered the grave to be opened, when each time the apparent corpse was found in the same corpse-like condition. Finally, at the stipulated time, the grave was again opened; lock and seal were found in order; the king, Sir Claude Wade and the diplomatic agents went themselves down into the hole and found the body of the fakir in the bag, which had begun to rot. His appearance was that of a corpse, and the attending physician could find no trace of life in the body. Water and artificial respiration were then resorted to; warm applications were made to his

head. His mouth was so firmly closed that the jaws had to be wrenched open by means of a knife inserted between the teeth. In half an hour's time the fakir revived, and asked the rajah whether he did now believe."

XXV.

The second case told by Braid refers to a fakir travelling about and submitting to such experiments for pay :

"In this case the body of the fakir was put into a small stone house, in the floor of which was a hollow with its bottom and sides cemented. Into this hole they put the body of the fakir, and covered the hollow with two heavy slabs of stone, fastening them down with cement. The opening of the stone house was then closed up by bricks and mortar, and a guard was left to watch the place. After four weeks the tomb was opened, the body taken up and submitted to the treatment described above, when the fakir gradually returned to life and declared himself to be perfectly well, saying that he would be willing to be immediately buried again for a whole year, if the king should desire it."

XXVI.

In another similar case the fakir was buried without a coffin, and the guard consisted of Mohammedan soldiers, so as to make sure that the Hindoos would not attempt to play any tricks. The result was the same as above.

Professor Pryer also gives accounts of such cases which took place under the supervision of the English authorities, and describes them in all their details. These are facts; and if those who call themselves "the representatives of science" know nothing about it, they have to blame for that nothing but their own want of experience; nor does anybody ask them to believe in that which they do not know; all that the public has a right to expect is that they should not, with an air of authority, deny the possibility of such things, but that they should first study the laws upon which such phenomena are based before pretending to be experts and judges therein.

Those who have attained the higher life may leave their body voluntarily and enter it again at will. It is said that Epimenides entered into a state of trance in which he remained for years, finding his surroundings very much changed when he returned to physical consciousness. Herodot. speaks of a philosopher whose name was Aristeas, and says that his soul often left his body and wandered about, and that he remembered what he had experienced while absent from his body. Pliny tells similar things of Harmonius, or Klazomenian; Saint Augustine speaks of a priest named Restitutus who used to enter voluntarily into a state in which his body was entirely insensible and to all appearance a corpse; the celebrated physi-

cian Cardanus said of himself, that he could enter that state whenever he pleased; and the history of all nations furnishes instances of such and similar cases; to say nothing about witchcraft, spiritualism and "psychic research."

But in those who have not yet learned to know the interior life of the soul and have not obtained the mastery over their physical organism, the soul may have its own reasons for leaving the physical form and not be able to return to the body, unless the conditions for such a return are restored, and upon this law is based a great number of cases belonging to that class of apparent deaths, which occur from mental emotions, terror, shame, fear, etc.; because it is not the body that creates the emotions (nobody can, for instance, frighten a corpse), but it is the emotions of the soul or mind that may paralyze the body and make it uninhabitable for the soul.

XXVII.

Owing to some great mental excitement, the Cardinal Spinosa fell into a state of apparent death. He was declared to be dead by his physicians, and they proceeded to open his chest for the purpose of embalming his body. When the lungs were laid open, the heart began to beat again; the cardinal returned to consciousness, and was just able to grasp after the knife of the surgeon when he fell back and died in reality.¹

¹ F. Kempner: Denkschrift, p. 6.

XXVIII.

Dr. Zimmermann (Hanover) writes :

A very strong peasant, between thirty and forty years of age, died out of fear of the gallows. The strictest examination could discover no heart-beat or pulse ; his face and lips were of an ashy color, his eyes glassy, his body stiff and cold, and he was to all appearances dead. All possible means were taken for the purpose of reviving the body, and among other measures strong liquid ammonia was poured into his nose, and the strongest medicine into his mouth ; but all without eliciting the faintest symptom of life. Thirty hours afterwards, however, he began to breathe, and opened his eyes, and within six days he was completely restored.¹

It is as impossible to limit the time in which the soul must return to the body as it is impossible for a house to determine when the man to whom it belongs will move into it after having absented himself, and as the soul in withdrawing itself from the body takes with it that principle which supplies the body with life, the change of material taking place in the organism is either so small or entirely interrupted in a case of trance, that neither air nor nutriment are needed, and a body in a state of apparent death may survive, where another body in the full activity of life would suffocate or starve. Examples of this kind have already been

¹ Kempner : Denkschrift, p. 15.

mentioned above ; but the following one may be of interest also.

XXIX.

In the year 1810 there died in France Mademoiselle Victorine Lefourcade, a young lady of great beauty, the daughter of a rich and noble family. Among the crowd of her admirers there was one Julius Bossuet, a poor journalist in Paris. His talents and amiability gained for him the affections of the young lady : but the remonstrances of her parents, who suffered from great pride and ambition, ultimately forced her to reject her lover and to marry a certain Monsieur Renelle, a banker and politician without any heart, who treated her cruelly. After having experienced a wretched life with him for a few years, she fell sick of grief and sorrow, and died.

They buried her, not in a tomb, but, according to her wish, in an ordinary grave in the churchyard of the village where she was born. Her lover hearing of her death was in great despair and made up his mind to put himself in possession of one of the locks of her beautiful hair, which he intended to keep in memory of his departed love. He travelled all the way by coach from Paris to the distant village, where he arrived, and at midnight he went to the churchyard prepared to open the grave. He dug out the coffin and unscrewed the lid, and was about to cut a lock of hair from the head of the corpse, when the lady opened her eyes and returned to life. She soon recognized her lover ; he took her away, and she remained hidden with him until she had fully recovered her health. She had no

desire to return to her husband whom she detested, and so she went to America with him who had saved her life. After twenty years they both returned to France, believing that the looks of the lady had changed so much that she would not be recognized by her former friends. But in this they were mistaken. She was recognized by some, and Mr. Renelle, hearing of it, had her arrested, and claimed her person. The court, however, refused to grant his claims, owing to their long separation and to the peculiarity of the circumstances connected with it.¹

But not only does a body in a state of apparent death require neither food nor air; wounds inflicted upon it, even of the most deadly kind, have no effect upon it. A person stabbed through the heart during that state, is for all that not dead; he will only bleed to death after the functions of life begin again to act, which may take place in the grave.

XXX.

In a certain medical college (not in the West) the instructor in anatomy received the body of a man for the purpose of dissection. In the presence of the class he demonstrated the manner of extirpating the eyeball and the way of opening the chest. Having gone through with that he went to demonstrate the amputation of the thigh; but as he was cutting through the soft parts, the man revived, the heart began to beat and

¹ F. Kempner: Denkschrift, p. 72.

the arteries to bleed, and the patient arose to a sitting posture. Teacher and students fled from the room terror-stricken, and when they returned the man was dead.¹

Apparent death is not, as many believe, a state of which everybody knows that it is only apparent and not real; but it is a state which resembles death so closely, that even the most experienced persons believe such a person to be really dead. In many cases not even the most experienced physician, coroner or undertaker can distinguish a case of apparent death from real death, neither by external examination, nor by means of the stethoscope, nor by any of the various tests which have been proposed by this or that writer, for all those tests have proved to be fallible; and it is now useless to discuss them at length, because the medical profession has already agreed *that there is no certain sign that a person is really, and not merely apparently, dead, except the beginning of a certain stage of putrefaction.* All other "tests" ought to be set down as delusive and unreliable, if not as misleading humbugs and lies. We know very well that certain modern "scientific authorities," starting from the erroneous theory that life is a product of the action of the heart, imagine that in all cases of apparent death there must be an action of the heart, however small, and that if the heart has entirely ceased to act, the person is dead; but in main-

¹ F. Kempner, p. 6.

taining such a perverted view they act no more wisely than would a watchmaker, if he were to say that the energy which sets a watch running is a product of the watch, and that if a watch has once stopped on account of some dust deposited therein, it can never be made to go.

And as by cleaning a dusty watch the watchmaker causes the hindrances to be removed, which prevented the energy stored up in the watch from setting the clockwork in motion; so in cases of apparent death from catalepsy, asphyxia, syncope, poisoning and other diseases causing obstacles to the manifestation of the life energy in the body, these obstacles may be removed by appropriate means, such as are known to every intelligent physician, and the energy of life being latent in the physical form, may be enabled to manifest itself again, when the harmony of the organism has been sufficiently restored, even after the heart has entirely ceased to beat.

XXXI.

Asclepiades, while returning from his country place to the city, met a great funeral procession on the road. He asked for the name of the deceased, but the consternation caused by his appearance was so great that he received no answer. He therefore went up to the corpse and looked at it, and found some occult sign that life was still present. He then declared

that the supposed corpse was not dead. The attendants and especially the heirs of the deceased laughed at his credulity and wanted to proceed with the funeral; but Asclepiades succeeded in obtaining a short respite. He caused the body to be taken back to the house and succeeded in restoring the man to life.¹

XXXII.

Eusebius speaks of an Armenian named Erus who was killed in battle. At the end of ten days the victims were collected for the purpose of being buried, when all the corpses were found to be in a state of decomposition except that of Erus. They therefore took him away with the object of cremating him with military honors, but when they placed him upon the funeral pyre he revived.²

XXXIII.

François de Cville, a captain of the guards, from Normandy, was wounded in the battle at Rouen, and being believed to be dead, he was stripped naked and put with other corpses into a ditch, where they covered him with a layer of earth. There he was from 11 A. M. to 6.30 P. M., unable to speak or move or give a sign of life. Thus his servant who searched for him found him, and thinking that he might possibly be not quite dead, carried him to his lodgings. There he lay for five days without being able to give a sign of consciousness, but burning with fever as much as he had suffered from cold while

¹ Celsus : *De re Medica*. ² Bouchut : *Les Signs de la Mort*, p. 17.

in the ditch. On the next day the town was taken by storm, and the soldiers of the enemy who came to occupy the place threw the supposed body out of the window of the room, where he fell upon a pile of manure. Upon this dunghill he was left as dead for three times twenty-four hours, but finally discovered by a relative, who thinking that he saw some signs of life, took care of him, and he recovered entirely.

It may be added as a remarkable coincidence, that the mother of this officer died while her husband was absent, and she was buried while in a state of pregnancy. On the next day her husband returned and caused the grave to be opened. The corpse was taken out and cut open, and the child taken alive from the womb. Thus this Mr. Cville had several narrow escapes.¹

XXXIV.

In 1558 the plague was at Dijon, and so many people died that no separate graves could be made for each corpse, but they buried them in long ditches, putting the corpses in rows and layers and covering each layer with earth, beginning again at one end of the ditch when they had finished the line at the other. A woman named Necole Lentillet died and was buried in the common ditch. On the next morning she returned to consciousness and tried to arise, but was too weak to lift the corpses lying on top of her body. For four days she remained in that situation, when the undertakers reaching the spot again in their regular order, heard her groans and saved her life.²

¹ Bouchut, p. 36.

² *Ibid.*, p. 37.

XXXV.

A certain doctor in France, thinking that he noticed some signs of life in an apparently dead body, caused the soles of the feet of the deceased to be rubbed with some hard substance that was soaked with an irritating liquid. The patient thus revived after all other remedies had proved of no avail.¹

XXXVI.

A lawyer at Vesoul was subject to fits of fainting, but kept the matter secret, so that the knowledge of it might not spread and interfere with his prospects of marriage; he only spoke confidentially of it to one of his friends. The marriage took place and he lived for some time in good health, when once he fell into one of his fits, and his wife and the doctors believing him dead, had him placed in a coffin and got everything ready for the funeral. His friend was absent, but fortunately he arrived just in time to prevent the burial. The lawyer recovered, and lived for sixteen years after this event.²

XXXVII.

M. Mareschal, a chaplain of Notre Dame at Paris, in 1714, while passing early one morning through the street Jean Robert, found a woman dressed in her shroud sitting by the side of a coffin in which she had been carried. She had returned to consciousness on the road, when the attendants getting frightened ran away.²

¹ Bouchut, p. 38.

² *Ibid.*, p. 40.

XXXVIII.

M. Bernard, a surgeon in Paris, reports the case of a monk of the order of St. Francis, whom he saw taken alive from the tomb in which he had been buried for four days. The exhumation took place, because it became known that he had been subject to fits of catalepsy.¹

XXXIX.

A person of high standing was taken with one of those diseases in which death usually does not occur suddenly, but is preceded by certain signs. The physician who attended him found him one evening in a dangerous state, and when he visited him again upon the following morning, he was told upon entering the house that the patient had died during the night. They had the body already placed in the coffin, but the doctor doubting that death could occur so suddenly, caused the supposed dead to be put back into bed. The man soon revived, and lived for many years afterward.²

XL.

The physician of Queen Isabella of Spain was treating a man during a dangerous illness, and as he went to see his patient one morning he was informed by the assistants that the man had died. He entered, and found the body in the habit of the order of St. Francis, laid out upon a board. Nothing daunted, he had him put back to bed in spite of the ridicule

¹ Bouchut, p. 40.

² *Ibid.*, p. 43.

of those present, and the patient soon revived and fully recovered.¹

XLI.

A fisherman was taken with apoplexy. Twenty-four hours afterwards, his body being cold, he was enveloped in a shroud and left lying upon the ground to await burial. After a while, they procured a coffin and carried him to the grave; but while on the way they heard some noise in the coffin, and when they removed the lid, foam was issuing from the mouth of the supposed corpse. It just happened that Dr. Bruhier was passing by. He had the patient brought home, where he was properly cared for, and soon regained his health.¹

XLII.

A young girl of a melancholy temper and loving solitude, imagined that she had seen a ghost, which caused her such a terror that she fell into a fever and died. There was no breath or pulse perceptible, and burning had no effect upon her. In this state she continued for twenty-four hours, when she was believed to be dead, and preparations were made for her funeral; but her physician making another attempt succeeded in making her swallow some volatile spirits, and she came back to life.¹

XLIII.

An officer of the dragoons, young and strong, fought a duel, was wounded by receiving a stab through the body and died.

¹ Bouchut, p. 44.

The chief surgeon of his regiment found him without life; there was not the faintest movement of the heart, but all the "indubitable" signs of death (except, of course, putrefaction). The participants in the duel then consulted with each other near the corpse, concerning the means of evading discovery by the police. Some proposed to bury the corpse immediately, others suggested to have the body cut into pieces, and to hide them away. Thus a part of the night passed away; but finally one of the party, finding the body still warm, bethought himself of applying restoratives, and after a while the man recovered. He had heard the whole conversation, without being able to give a sign of life.¹

XLIV.

Mr. Callinet, at Dijon, died. One of his friends hearing of it, went to the house, and arrived at the moment when the body was being put into the coffin. He imagined that he saw the twitching of a muscle in the face of the corpse, and had the courage to apply restoratives in spite of the ridicule of those who were present; after which the man recovered, and lived for many years.²

XLV.

Dr. J. Schmid reports the case of a girl, seven years of age, who while playing with her companions fell suddenly down and died. There was paleness, absence of pulse, insensibility to all stimulus. Nevertheless, owing to the requests made by the

¹ Bouchut, p. 49.

² *Ibid.*, p. 50.

distressed parents, the apparently hopeless attempts for resuscitation were continued. After three-quarters of an hour the girl gave a sigh and recovered.¹

The following cases have been collected by the author.

XLVI.

At Wels (Austria) a woman died, and as no signs of putrefaction appeared for five days, all sorts of means were resorted to for the purpose of reviving the body. They were of no avail, and it was finally resolved not to delay the burying any longer. On the night preceding the funeral a large crowd met for the purpose of holding the "wake." It was a merry party, and some of those present got drunk and amused themselves in making jests with the corpse and offering it liquor. In the midst of the merry-making the woman awoke and sat up in her coffin. The company ran away, and when they returned they found that the woman had gone to bed, where she slept, and was well the next day. She had been conscious of all that had taken place, but not been able to move.

XLVII.

In another town in Austria, a student made a bet that he would not be afraid to go at night to the graveyard, open a grave, steal the corpse and carry it to his room. This he did, accordingly, and the grave he opened happened to be that of a young girl who had been buried on the preceding day. He

¹ Bouchut, p. 51.

took the body upon his shoulders and carried it to his room, where he put it upon a lounge near the stove. He then went to sleep. During the night he was awakened by a noise. The girl had awakened from her trance and was sitting up. He was so much terrified that his hair turned white; but the girl, thus saved, returned to her parents.

Thus the cases in which persons apparently dead have been restored to health by appropriate means are innumerable, and such accounts may be continued without end, as they continue to happen every day, while it is also self-evident, that if they had not thus been saved, premature burial and death in the coffin would have taken place. But it also often happens that cases of apparent death recover spontaneously, and even after all possible means taken for the restoration of life have failed. This is especially the case in catalepsy, due to nervous exhaustion, and which requires no other remedies than sufficient rest for the recuperation of the life-power, which no kind of medicine can supply. The following are some instances of cases belonging to this category.

XLVIII.

In a hospital at Cassel an apothecary clerk died. He was carried into the dead-chamber and deposited there with some other corpses. During the following night he awoke, and, recognizing the place where he was, he arose, dragged himself

to the door and kicked against it. The noise was heard and aid arrived. He was put back to bed and recovered.¹

XLIX.

A man made a voyage for the purpose of visiting his brother; but when he arrived, he found that the brother had died on that very day. This affected him so much that he fainted. Restoratives were applied, but in vain; and as the doctors believed him to be dead, they resolved to open his body for the purpose of finding the cause of his death. But the "dead" man was conscious all the time and understood the conversation. The fear of being dissected alive made him gather sufficient will-power to open his eyes. He arose and ran away.²

L.

Lancisi reports a case in which he saw a man in a state of apparent death arise from the catafalque upon which he was placed and leave the church, while the funeral service was sung.³

LI.

Plutarch says, that a person having fallen from a certain height, died, and there was no sign of a wound upon his body. After three days they carried him to the grave, when he suddenly revived.³

¹ Bouchut, p. 58.

² *Ibid.*, p. 52.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

LII.

The daughter of Mr. Yonge died at the hospital at Paris. While she was being carried to the grave, she awoke and recovered. She married afterwards.¹

LIII.

At the same hospital a merchant died, and his body was taken to Clement, where they deposited him with other corpses in a common grave. At two o'clock that night he awoke, tore away his shroud and went to the porter's lodge of the cemetery, knocking and requesting to have the door opened. He then went home.²

LIV.

Mrs. Eva Meyers, living at the village of Achen, in Wurtemberg, twenty-three years of age, was during an epidemic taken sick. Her condition became rapidly worse, and she apparently died. They put her into a coffin and carried her from the warm room into a cold place, there to await burial, which was to take place at 2 p. m. on the following day. Shortly after noon on that day and before the carriers arrived, she awoke and made an effort to rise. Her aunt, who was present and who believed that a ghost had taken possession of her, took a stick and would have killed her, if she had not been prevented by another woman there. Nevertheless, she succeeded in pushing the body back violently into the coffin, after which she indig-

¹ Bouchut, p. 39.

² *Ibid.*, p. 42.

nantly went to her room. The patient remained helplessly in that condition, and would have been buried if the usual hour for the burial had not for some reason been changed. Thus she remained for another twelve hours, when she was able to gather sufficient strength to arise. She still lives, and has paid the charges for her funeral, which were claimed by the clergy, the bell-ringer and the undertaker.¹

LV.

A gentleman, sixty years of age, fell sick with a fever, and gave up what was believed to be his last breath. Everything was prepared for the burial, and it was also agreed that the body should be opened and a post-mortem examination be made. Two priests were left alone with the corpse that night, and a dispute arose between them as to who should earn the wages for the prayers to be said. The noise which they made attracted Mr. Bruhier's father, who went to the death-room for the purpose of preventing a fight. As he approached the corpse, his curiosity prompted him to lift the cloth from its face. He thought he saw some light twitching of the mouth, and taking a lighted candle he touched the nose, mouth and temples, all of which had no effect. As he was about to leave the body he thought he saw the same motion, and therefore tried some restoratives, but in vain; but as he left the body the second time, believing it now surely to be dead, the patient recovered and arose. He had been conscious all along, and knew all that had taken place between the two priests and

¹ Bouchut, p. 45.

heard their dispute. He became perfectly well and lived for many years afterwards.¹

LVI.

In the year 1579, a certain Hans Feurtel apparently died of a serious disease, and was laid out in a coffin. Five hours afterwards he awoke, and seeing the undertaker at his side, he said to him: "My friend, will you be so kind as to present my respects to the parson, and offer to him my excuses for the disappointment I have caused to him in making so bold as to revive again."²

LVII.

A monk at Clermont, in the Auvergne, apparently died, and was deposited in the vault of a church, where he awoke and succeeded in bursting his coffin. His groans and cries were heard by some persons in the church, and he was saved.³

LVIII.

A young lady at Versailles died after a short sickness. The coffin was somewhat small and the body had to be forced into it. She was carried to the grave by girls of her own age; but on the way to the cemetery they noticed a movement within. Being terrified, they dropped the coffin, and when it was opened the young lady was found to be alive, and she soon recovered her health.⁴

¹ Bouchut, p. 49.

² *Ibid.*, p. 47.

³ Janin: "Reflexions," p. 89.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

LIX.

A young married man died, owing to nervous exhaustion caused by overstudy and work, and was to be buried. His wife refused to believe him dead, and did all she could to delay the funeral. In vain the physicians, the clergy and her own relatives tried to remove the disconsolate widow from the presence of her dead husband, and to commit his body to the grave; she opposed their efforts with a great deal of courage, and even when her own reason told her there was no longer any hope; still an interior voice seemed to say that her beloved husband was still alive. She sat up day and night with the body and watched it, and on the fifth day she heard the apparently dead man calling her name. He soon revived, and lived for a long time afterwards in good health.¹

LX.

Some fifteen years ago a servant girl died at Chalons, and was to be buried two days afterwards. Owing to the influence of a lady of high standing, who doubted that the girl was dead, and insisted that the appearance of signs of putrefaction should be waited for, the funeral was delayed for six days. On the evening of the sixth day the girl awoke, and is at present enjoying good health.²

LXI.

A French family were on their way to America. During the voyage their child, a girl three years of age, died, and

¹ Lenormand, p. 65.

² *Ibid.*, p. 73.

was about to be confided to a watery grave, when at the very last moment the girl revived and recovered. At twelve years of age this child returned to France, and became afterwards the celebrated Madame de Maintenon.¹

Thus instances of cases in which a recovery from apparent death took place, either with or without medical aid, might be cited without end. Everybody knows that in the development of any organism the energy of life acts from within outwardly, causing the organism to grow, not by any artificial addition from without, but by interior unfoldment, for the purpose of which nutriment is absorbed from outside surroundings. In the process of death and apparent death the reverse takes place; the outward life withdraws itself within the interior organs and ultimately within the very centre of the soul, before leaving the body; but the organs from which the life energy has been withdrawn necessarily cease to manifest any activity of life and therefore appear to be dead, until for some reason the harmony of the organism is restored and the *activity of the life*, which has not yet departed, becomes manifest again. Such an awakening may take place in good time, or after the body has been doomed to destruction by those who, however learned they may be in other respects, are ignorant in regard to the nature of life. Such instances are the following ones.

¹ F. Lindemann, 1851.

LXII.

HISTORICAL CASES.

Pliny gives an account of a case in which Acilius Aviola, a Roman consul, awoke from a trance while his body was being cremated. The funeral pyre had already been set on fire, and the flames prevented anybody from approaching. Thus he could not be saved and was burned alive.

The same happened to the Roman pretor, Lucius Lamia.

Celius Suberanius was more fortunate; he escaped while the fire was being kindled.

Cerfidous, the husband of the maternal aunt of Pliny, came to life while the preparations for burning his body were being made.

Geron, archbishop of Cologne, was buried while in a state of apparent death. At the end of the ceremony he awoke and cried out, but died while attempts were being made to come to his aid.

LXIII.

Some years ago a lady of rank at Odessa died, and was buried on the third day in a family tomb in the church. Mass was read, and after the ceremonies were over everybody went away, only the sexton remained for the purpose of attending to his duties. After a while the sexton heard groans and cries proceeding from the interior of the vault; but as the lady's

death had been certified to by the physician, he imagined that the noise was made by a ghost. Nevertheless, he informed the priest about the matter, and the priest went with him to the church, heard the same cries, but was of the same opinion as the sexton, and requested him not to say anything about it, so as not to give the church the reputation of being haunted by a ghost. Thus for several days they both heard these cries and groans, but kept the matter secret, and after a while the noises ceased. A year after, another member of the same family died; and when the tomb was again opened to admit the corpse, the coffin of the lady was found empty and her corpse sitting upon the steps leading to the entrance of the vault, where she had starved to death.¹

LXIV.

In another small town in Prussia, an undertaker, living within the limits of the cemetery, heard during the night cries proceeding from within a grave in which a person had been buried on the previous day. Not daring to interfere without permission, he went to the police and reported the matter. When, after a great deal of delay, the required formalities were fulfilled and permission granted to open the grave, it was found that the man had been buried alive; but he was now dead. His body which had been cold at the time of the funeral, was now warm and bleeding from many wounds, where he had skinned his hands and head in his struggles to free himself before suffocation made an end to his misery.¹

¹ Collected by the author.

LXV.

In the month of December, 1842, an inhabitant of Eyures, in France, died and was buried. A few days afterwards a rumor began to spread that his death was due to an overdose of opium having been given to him by a physician. Finally, the authorities ordered the grave to be opened, when it was found that the supposed dead man had awakened and opened with his teeth the veins of his arms for the purpose of ending his torture, and then he had died in his coffin.¹

LXVI,

The Paris *Figaro* of November 29, 1867, gives the following account of a vivisection made by a member of the Faculty of Medicine :

“Five years ago I was preparing for an examination, and I therefore went one night alone into the dissecting-room for the purpose of studying certain abdominal viscera, carrying a light in my hand. An insane woman having died on the day before was extended naked upon the marble slab. I placed my candle upon her chest, and made a cut through the skin over the stomach. At that moment the supposed corpse gave a terrible scream, and, rising up, caused the light to fall down and become extinguished. Then a terrible struggle began; the woman with one of her cold, clammy hands took hold of my hair, and with the other clawed my face with her finger-nails. I was

¹ Lenormand, p. 78.

beside myself with terror, and blindly struck about me with the scalpel which I still held in my hand. Suddenly my knife struck an obstacle; a sigh followed, the grasp on my hair was loosened, I fainted and knew nothing more. When I awoke it was daylight, and I found myself upon the floor lying beside the bloody corpse of the woman whom I had killed, as my knife had gone directly to her heart. I replaced the corpse upon the table, and said nothing about it; but the recollection of this event fills me with horror, and the marks which the nails of that insane woman left upon my face are still there."

LXVII.

A woman known to have been ill-treated by her husband, died while in a state of advanced pregnancy, and was buried. Rumors were set afloat soon afterwards that she had been killed by her husband, and this led to an investigation, in the course of which the grave was reopened. At the feet of the corpse there was found the corpse of a new-born child; and all the circumstances connected with this proved that the woman had awakened, given birth to her child, and died in great torture. Her lips were bloody from the bites made by her teeth, and her hands pressed together as if in an excess of great pain.¹

LXVIII.

It was a cold night in winter, when at 8 P. M. a pious woman was still praying at the church of Saint Nizier de Mariegny, that

¹ Journal de Paris, December 7, 1882.

was attached to the monastery of the Récollets, and in which were situated the burial places for the monks of that order. Suddenly the woman heard a voice as if coming from the ground below, crying for help. At first she was frightened; but taking courage, she proceeded towards the locality from which the noise originated, and soon she stood upon a spot where she could distinctly hear the voice crying at intervals: "Help me! O God, have mercy upon me!" Filled with terror, the woman fled and went to the door of the monastery, demanding to speak to the prior immediately. When the prior arrived, she told him of what she had experienced; but the prior was of a sceptical turn of mind and sent the woman away, saying that the whole was due to her excited imagination.

A month afterwards another monk died, and when they removed the heavy stone covering the vault, a horrible sight met the eyes of the crowd. A corpse, clothed in the habit of the order, was sitting upon the steps leading into the tomb. His hands and arms showed deep wounds, which the man had inflicted upon himself, and other signs testified to the vain efforts which he had made to lift the stone that closed his prison. It was the corpse of a young monk who had "died" shortly before those cries were heard by the woman.¹

LXIX.

The Prince L—— owned a country residence near Florence. It was an old castle, and among other things contained also the family tomb. That tomb was a vault built in a locality

¹ Lenormand, p. 68.

where the earth had the peculiar quality, found also in other places, of conserving and mummifying the bodies placed therein, and its entrance was closed by a massive door. The prince died of a disease due to nervous exhaustion, and his body was deposited in the tomb with all the ceremonies due to his rank. A month afterwards the son of the prince, about to undertake a long voyage, decided once more to visit the remains of his father. He went alone to the tomb, unlocked the door, but some object on the inside prevented the door from opening. Taken with an evil presentiment, he called for aid, which arrived, and when the door was forcibly pushed open it was discovered that the object to which the resistance was due, was the corpse of the prince, who, after awakening, had made vain efforts for escape and finally starved to death.¹

LXX.

A most interesting story is told by L. Lenormand in regard to an event which happened at Toulouse in 1706. It relates a case of apparent death of a prominent married lady, who was saved by her lover, but many years afterwards discovered by her former husband, who brought suit against her and claimed her person. The substance of it is as follows: M. d'Olmond, the president of the parliament at Toulouse, had a beautiful daughter named Victorine, fifteen years of age, who fell in love with a certain Chevalier de Sézanne, an officer in the army, and became engaged to him. But before the marriage took place, the officer had to leave for the seat of war, and two years passed away without receiving any information from him. At last it

¹ L. Lenormand, p. 27.

was reported that he with his whole command had been killed in battle. Great was the grief of the bride, but after waiting another year, she gave way to the entreaties of her parents and submitted to be married to an M. de Saint Alban, by whom she had a daughter whom she loved very much ; but three years afterwards she died and her husband had her body deposited in a magnificent tomb.

Five years afterwards M. de St. Alban, while visiting that tomb, discovered there another visitor, a stranger, a lady whose resemblance to his deceased wife was very great, and who, upon observing him, went away in haste. He followed her, and succeeded in discovering that her name was Madame Sézanne and that she had recently arrived at Toulouse with her husband. This aroused his suspicions. He caused the tomb to be opened, and found the coffin of his wife empty. He directly applied to the parliament, and evidence was brought forth that five years ago, on the day after the death of Madame de Saint Alban, the Chevalier de Sézanne had been seen leaving the town with a veiled lady.

An investigation followed. M. Sézanne produced proofs that his wife was the daughter of an Italian peasant. Madame Sézanne denied all knowledge of M. de Saint Alban as well as of M. d'Olmond, with whom she was confronted, and was about to receive a judgment in her favor, when M. de Saint Alban left the court-room and soon afterwards returned with his daughter. At the sight of the girl, Madame Sézanne, who was in reality Madame de St. Alban, was overtaken by her maternal emotions and could no longer keep up her disguise. It then became clear that M. Sézanne, having been made prisoner of

war in a battle, had been detained for years, but finally regained his liberty and arrived at Toulouse the day after the funeral of Madame de St. Alban had taken place. Wishing to see once more the features of his beloved, he went to the tomb, opened it and embraced the dear remains. This embrace revived the apparently dead lady, whom he carried to his lodgings, and ultimately she fled with him to Italy, where he caused her to be adopted by an Italian peasant and married her. Thinking that they were safe, they visited France five years afterwards, but were discovered as related above.

In this case the lady's former husband, M. de Saint Alban, received judgment in his favor, but the lady was granted permission to retire into a convent for the rest of her life.

This appears to have been a case of trance, in which the soul, although having retired from the exterior physical life-activity, had not yet broken its connection with the body and was attracted to earth-life again by the affection of the longed-for lover; for it is the love for earthly things which binds the soul to the earth, and when the link which connects it with the physical body is still unbroken, the affection of its friends may induce the soul to enter the body again.

Many cases are known in which death has been delayed owing to some strong desire of the dying, or the soul called back on account of its desires for love or for revenge. As an instance of it may serve the following, taken from the *New York Sun* of May 7, 1894.

LXXI.

Dr. W. H. Hendrik, of Indianapolis, died, or, as he expresses it, passed out of the body, having been taken sick with typhoid pneumonia during the war with the Southern Confederates. He was then at Washington, D. C., in the house of his sister, Mrs. Parker. All the preparations were made for the burial of the body, but while the family was waiting for the arrival of the undertaker, the doctor awoke from his trance and soon regained his health. He afterwards gave an account of the visions he had seen while out of his body, and stated that he had voluntarily returned to earth.

Numerous instances go to show that even after that link which binds the soul to the body has been broken forever, the soul may still be bound to the earth, owing to some strong desire for the gratification of a wish. But of the many cases of that kind, the author relates the following which happened in his own family. It is not a case of premature burial, but rather one of premature death, and it will serve to illustrate the power which an unfulfilled desire exercises over the soul, even after the death of the body.

LXXII.

I was born on the 22d of November, 1838, and my grandmother, Babette von Stack, died on the 18th of October of the same year, consequently thirty-four days previous to my birth.

As I was to be the first born grandchild of my grandmother, who was a very affectionate woman, it does not appear strange that her desire to see me was very strong, and this desire seems to have kept her bound to the terrestrial plane until after I was born: for not only my mother, but also other persons present there, affirm that after I was born and laid in the cradle, the "thought-body" (astral form) of my deceased grandmother appeared visibly to all, by the side of the cradle, bent over it, looked at me, smiled contentedly, and having that wish gratified, disappeared and was seen no more.¹

When a man has once been buried in a coffin under the ground, and is believed to be dead, there is little prospect for his escape if he returns again to consciousness within his grave; but love is a power that has been seen to be victorious not only over death, but even over the undertaker, as is shown.

LXXIII.

Two merchants at Paris, who were intimate friends, had children, one a son and the other a daughter, who from their earliest age were destined by their parents to marry each other, and a strong affection grew up between them as they became older, yet avarice stepped in and the father of the young lady forced her to marry a rich banker, one

¹ This fact every one may explain to his or her own satisfaction. It is put forward merely as indicating the possibility of another state of existence of which modern science knows nothing at present.

of his creditors. Thus the girl sacrificed herself for the purpose of saving her father from financial ruin, but her marriage was not happy, she pined away and finally died of grief. Her lover fell into a state of despair, and refused to believe that she was dead. He claimed that the lady had appeared to him and asked his aid. These "hallucinations" grew so strong, that he finally went to the cemetery, bribed the undertaker and had the body exhumed. Finding the corpse still without any signs of decomposition, he took it with him to his house, and there the lady awoke from her trance among the endearments which he showered upon her. She soon regained her health, and they both fled to England, where they lived for many years afterwards.¹

It is nowadays almost universally admitted, that the mind of one person may act upon the mind of another at a great distance, and especially that the thoughts of the dying may strongly impress absent friends. Why, then, should it be considered impossible that a soul which has not yet fully broken its connection with the physical body can impress an absent friend, even while the body is in a state of apparent death? Every one who is acquainted with the nature of trance, especially if he has once entered himself into that state, knows that a state of deathlike unconsciousness of the body, far from hindering the freedom of the soul, furnishes the very conditions required for the communion of the

¹ Pitaval: Causes Célèbres.

soul with those to whom it is attracted and who are impressible enough to receive its influence; for as the sages teach, "As the eyes of the body become closed to the light of the external world, the eye of the soul becomes opened to behold all things in the light of the spirit."¹

Considerations of this kind would bring us within the field of spiritualism, which is still pooh-poohed by "science," and which it is not our purpose to enter at present; but for the purpose of understanding the real nature of life and death and the intermediate state of apparent death, trance and catalepsy, it is necessary that we should study to a certain extent the *science of the soul* and know the link which connects the soul with the body, the final rupture of which link constitutes real death. Of this science of the soul physical science is totally ignorant and has nothing whatever to do with it, as it belongs to an entirely different plane of existence. A representative of "modern science," which means physical, material science, such as depends for its knowledge entirely upon the illusions of the senses and the inferences drawn therefrom, can therefore not pose as an expert in that which belongs to the realm of the soul, and has no right to decide upon it, except in so far as he may base his claims for sitting in judgment, not upon his being a "scientist," but upon his being in

¹ Upanishads.

possession of human reason in spite of the perversions of truth which a system of entire disregard for psychic phenomena has impressed upon him.

The cases cited above will be sufficient to show that cases of premature burial do occur, and that they may be prevented. Those who desire to obtain still more material for proving this, will find an abundance of it in the works mentioned below :

BRUTIER, in his work "Dissertations sur l'Incertitude des Signes de la Mort et l'Abus des Enterrements Précipités," produces accounts of 181 cases, among which there are those of 52 persons buried alive, 4 dissected alive, 53 that awoke in their coffins before being buried, and 72 other cases of apparent death.

BOUCHUT, E., Professor of Medicine at the University of Paris. "Les Signes de la Mort."

LENORMAND, L. "Des Inhumations Précipités."

WINSLOW. "Dissertations sur les Signes de la Mort."

SAUVAGES. "Histoire de l'Académie des Sciences."

JANIN. "Réflexions sur le Triste Sort des Personnes qui sous une Apparence de Mort ont été Enterrées Vivantes."

DURANDE, F. "Mémoire sur l'Abus de l'Ensevelissement des Morts."

LEGUERN. "Du Danger des Inhumations Précipités."

JOSAT. "De la Mort."

LEBON. "De la Mort Apparente."

BOILLET. "Victimes Ignorées."

KEMPNER, F. "Denkschrift."

REICHENBACH, C. VON. "Der Sensitive Mensch."

DOMSDORF. "Tod, Scheintod und zu frühe Beerdigung."

HERZ. "Ueber die zu frühe Beerdigung bei den Juden."

KOPP. "Denkwürdigkeiten in der ärztlichen Praxis."

LINDEMANN, F. "Die letzte Verwandlung."

REBSAMEN. "Observationes Medicinæ Forensis."

NOTHNAGEL. "Dissertatio de Hominibus Apparenter Mortuis."

Besides the above, many celebrated authors have written on this subject, and cited cases of premature

burial; such as Alexander von Humboldt, Hufeland, Altschul, Orfila, Buffon, Haller, Baco, Struwe, Kessler, Schuermayer, Harves, Niemayer, Fabricius, Schenk, Eschenbach, Thierry, Thomassin, Froriep, Villanova, Wallroth, Brinkman and many others too numerous to be mentioned, and if any one watches the daily papers, he will find in them accounts of people having been buried alive or under suspicious circumstances, occurring so frequently, that even after making a large deduction for possible fancy and exaggeration, enough remains to fill the heart of a thinking man with pity, on account of the great many victims of ignorance.¹

As to the frequency of such deplorable occurrences, it will naturally be greatest in countries where the greatest ignorance in regard to the true nature of life and death exists; where a person is considered a nuisance as soon as he appears to be dead, and is hurried

¹ Emma Hardinge Britten, a well-known writer on spiritualism, writes: "I have good reason to believe that many hapless victims have been and may be buried alive, of whom the world knows nothing. My own personal knowledge of such cases was obtained thus: When I first commenced to investigate spiritualism some thirty-five years ago, among the thousands of spirits giving their names and professions and modes of death, I am sure there were at least fifty who, when giving other and indubitable proof of their identity, declared that they had been buried alive, and insisted that this was the result of hasty burials. Prof. S. B. Brittan, a well-known editor, was in a trance for over twelve days, and would have been buried but for the intervention of a friend. Fannie Davis Smith was also in a trance forty days, and was only saved from being buried alive in Troy, N. Y., by a clairvoyant, who insisted that she was still alive." (*From a private letter dated June 25, 1894.*)

into the grave, and where no legal enactments exist for keeping the bodies a certain time and allowing a person in a state of trance or catalepsy a chance to resume the functions of life.

For this reason cases of premature burial are very frequent in France, Spain and Portugal, where only a very short time is allowed for keeping the bodies of those who are considered dead; and they often occur in the United States, where no legal regulations of that kind exist, but where it rests with the good judgment or the ignorance of the relatives to decide whether or not a person appearing to be dead is to be buried alive or not, for the certificate of a doctor or undertaker can give no assurance that in an apparently dead man the soul has departed from the body, as long as the only reliable sign of it, the decomposition of the vital organs, has not begun.

LXXIV.

Madame de P——, aged eighteen years and subject to hysteria, apparently died, and for forty hours she presented all the signs of real death. All possible means of restoring her to life were taken, but proved of no avail. Five physicians of Lyons were called in, and they finally agreed, positively, that the lady was really dead. The funeral preparations were made; but owing to the supplications of a sister of the deceased, the burial was delayed, when after a while the patient

recovered. She said that she had all the time been aware of all that was going on, without being able to give a sign and without even being desirous of attempting it.¹

LXXV.

On the 26th of November, 1846, F. Bourdet, the wife of a farmer at Lansac, died, and was buried after due examination was made. The coffin was deposited in the grave and the undertaker began to shovel the earth upon it, when knockings were heard coming from the interior of the coffin. Thereupon they opened the box and found the woman alive, and she lived for many years afterwards.²

LXXVI.

In 1842, a remarkable affair occupied the attention of the court at the city of Nantes. A man apparently died, and his death was certified to by the attending physicians and the inspector; he was put into a coffin and the religious ceremonies were performed in good style. At the end of the funeral service, and as he was about to be buried, he awoke from his trance. The clergy and the undertakers sent in their accounts for the funeral expenses; but he refused to pay them, giving as his reason that he had not ordered them; whereupon he was sued for the money.³

It would require nothing short of clairvoyant power to find out how many per cent. of all persons interred

¹ F. Kempner, p. 38.

² *Ibid.*, p. 39.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

are buried alive. Professor Froriep says that in 1829 arrangements were made at the cemetery at New York, so as to bury the corpses in such a manner as not to prevent them from communicating with the outside world in case that one or another should have awakened to life, and that this was done by means of strings attached to their hands and communicating with a bell. He says that among 1,200 persons buried six came to life again in the grave. This would make it one-half per cent. of the whole number. Some years ago a graveyard in a town in Holland was removed to another place, and over one-half per cent. of the corpses examined, gave indications of having been buried alive and having awakened in their coffins. The Humane Society in London is said to have brought back to life 2,175 apparently dead persons within a term of twenty-two years, that of Amsterdam 990 within twenty-five, and in Hamburg 107 within five years. According to Bruhier's calculations, among 30,992 persons who apparently died in one year, there were 154 buried alive.¹

Whether the correctness of these numbers can be scientifically proven or not, is a matter of little consequence, as it is not our purpose to establish a theory for the purpose of gratifying the curiosity of the scientists, but to call the public attention to certain facts which prove that there is nobody certain that he will not, at

¹ Kempner, p. 51.

some time or other, have to undergo the most horrible of all misfortunes, that of being buried alive and helplessly ending his life in a narrow coffin, six feet under ground.

Each of us, in being born into this world, received at the same time the sentence of death, which will surely be executed sooner or later ; our personalities will die, and as long as we identify ourselves with our mortal self, we will have to partake of the fate of that self and its sufferings. What science can then be more important than that which teaches the true nature of the immortal soul, whose home is beyond the sphere of human joys and human sorrows, and which from the serene heights looks down like an independent spectator upon the miseries of this world, while it recognizes their causes and seeks to remove them by aiding the movement of universal enlightenment and freedom of thought?

THE PHILOSOPHY OF DEATH.

Death is the complete separation of the soul from the physical body, and by the term "soul" we mean not any particular organ of man, nor anything that can be found in his body by vivisection or by means of the microscope, but *the real man himself*, the substantial but transcendental *ego*, who is himself the seat of his own life and his own self-consciousness and remains a living and conscious being, even after his life and his consciousness have ceased to manifest themselves in the physical body with which he was clothed, and which he inhabited during his temporary stay upon the physical plane of existence. In other words, the soul is the source of that activity, which, when it becomes manifest in a living body, is called "life" and "consciousness," and which being uncreated and self-existent, is never born and never dies, although the forms in which it becomes manifest are born and become decomposed at the end of their time.

As the soul is something not to be discovered objectively and not perceptible to anything but to the perception of the soul, its investigation has nothing whatever to do with physical science, and physical science

will never know the true nature of life and consciousness, however much it may study its manifestations on the external plane of existence and mistake its effects for the cause and the cause for an effect. Subjective experiences cannot be objectively proven to the satisfaction of a scientist inexperienced in them, but they are nevertheless real to those who have experience therein. The inner or soul-life of man is not only as real to him as his outward life, but far more real than the life of the sensual illusions that go to make up his existence upon the objective physical plane.

If we wish to answer the question, What is Death? we must first know what is Life. L. Bouchut, a professor of medicine at the Paris University, says, "Perhaps we may discover some day the secret of the activity of life, to which so many various phenomena are related, and in showing what life is, we will be able to say, See, this is death!" To this we may add, Let every one who wishes to discover what life itself is and not merely to discover its manifestations and phenomena, learn to know that part of his self which is the source of his own life and consciousness; only when he has found the source of life in himself will he be able to recognize the same source in all other beings, and know that life itself never dies, even if the body in which its activity is manifested is subject to death and decay.

But if we do not know our own soul and have therefore no positive soul-knowledge, yet nevertheless desire to obtain some information concerning the nature and life of the soul, there will be no other way to obtain it than by applying to those who are in possession of this kind of self-knowledge and have experienced within themselves this soul-life. Such information is no real knowledge and cannot be proven objectively to the sceptic; it can only give us some indications as to how we may ourselves find the way to that knowledge of our own soul which constitutes the higher science of life.

To those who have found their own self and learned to know their own inner life belong all the great sages and founders of our religious systems and philosophies, and they all tell us essentially the same truths.

Plotinus so well recognized his own immortal nature as being something quite different from his personality, that when he was asked about the time in which he was born, he answered that his being born into this world was a very insignificant event in his immortal career and that it was not worth while to remember it.

When *Socrates*, at the time of his death, was asked by his friends where they should bury him, he answered them saying that they might bury him wherever they pleased, provided that they could catch him, and he

added, "Say not that you have buried Socrates, but say that you have buried his body."

Porphyry says: "The soul is an incorporeal essence, having the power to extend its activity to any desired locality. The realm of the soul has its inhabitants having ethereal (semi-material) forms."

Jamblicus says: "If the soul rises up to the higher intelligences, it becomes godlike and able to know the above and below."

The *Bhagavad Gita* teaches: "I never was non-existent, nor thou, nor these rulers of men, nor shall any of us hereafter cease to be. As in this corporeal body childhood, youth and old age appertain to the embodied (part of man), so the disembodied soul obtains another body. That which is unreal (the form) has no real existence, and that which is real (the Self) never ceases to be."

In the *Prashna Upanishad* we read: "From the Self (God) is this life born, and as the shadow beside a man, this is expended in that. By the mind's action it enters the body. The soul is the seer, toucher, hearer, smeller, thinker, knower, doer, the perceiving spirit, and rests in the supreme unchanging Self."

Also the *Katha Upanishad*: "The soul neither is born nor dies, it comes from no place, and there is nothing of which it was made. Unborn, unthinkable, eternal, this Self does not die when the body dies; it is

hidden within the heart of men, and visible only to the eye of the true understanding."

The Christian teacher, *J. Eckhart*, says: "The soul is above time and space, it is greater than the body; and it is more correct to say that the body is within the soul, than that the soul is within the body. In its uppermost region the soul (the Self) is of a divine nature and never ceases to be in God. The power is a light which never becomes extinct. To know the true nature of one's soul is to know God."

Thus we might go on with almost endless quotations from Christian and "heathen" saints, going to explain that man has a soul, which is his very self and something quite different from the body which he inhabits. This soul or Self is the cause of the activity of that self in the body; the Self is not the outgrowth of the activity of the body, but as long as this Self or Soul is connected with the body, it supplies the body with life energy and causes it to live and be conscious; but when the soul departs from the body, its life and consciousness depart with it, and the physical life energy which remains in the body, being no longer controlled by the soul, only serves to decompose and disintegrate the physical form.

Many attempts have been made to define that which is undefinable and unlimited, and can therefore not be brought within the narrow conception of the limited

mind. The Encyclopædia calls the soul "the spiritual, rational, immortal part in man"; but the soul is, as Eckhart explains, not only in physical man, but also outside of him; it is, in fact, the man spiritual himself, who in his spiritual aspect is omnipresent, while in his physical aspect he is a limited being, inhabiting a corporeal body of flesh and blood which is subject to death. Perhaps we may say, "The soul is the individualization of the universal Self (Âtma), the omnipresent Spirit which is the life and substance of everything"; but this is a thought which will not be grasped by everybody on reading it for the first time, but requires deep study for its comprehension; it is a truth that has been taught for thousands of years, and nevertheless the scientific world has not yet grown up to its understanding. The soul is individualized life. With its higher powers and faculties it is rooted in and one with the one life in the universe; with its lower activities it is bound to and for the time being identified with the physical body of man.

According to the superstitions of certain would-be scientists, the soul or life is a product of matter; according to the doctrines of those who know the soul or self, matter is a phenomenal aspect and product of the soul, and the activity of matter is due to the presence of the soul or energy therein. The soul, the true Self, never was born and never dies, but it has produced

its own material state and taken up its habitation in a corporeal form for the purpose of attaining knowledge by experiencing good and evil in physical life, and it leaves one body at the time of "death" and takes up another one afterwards, and repeats its experiences until its lessons are learned, for the lesson of eternal life which man has to learn is far too great to be learned in one short life upon this earth. This is a truth taught in all the ancient books of wisdom, and symbolically represented in the Bible by the falling down of Jesus (the soul) three times on the way to "Calvary," allegorically referring to the great renunciation of self, in which mortality becomes swallowed up by immortality and the delusion of the limitation of self becomes absorbed in the all-consciousness of divine being.

"As one lays off his worn-out old clothes and takes up a new garment, so the soul having cast off its mortal habitation, after a time of rest assumes another material form," says the Bhagavad Gita. The soul is the permanent inhabitant of a higher state of existence and consciousness; but with its lower faculties it enters into material being and dwells therein as a prisoner until the time of the self-inflicted sentence expires, but the house in which it dwells during its sojourn upon this planet is born from physical parents, and dies; it enjoys and suffers, and the soul, or to speak more cor-

rectly, the lower nature of the soul, enjoys and suffers with it. Conception and birth are the union of the soul with the body, death is the separation of the body and soul.

There is only one life in man, but this life supplies the different principles in his constitution with energy, and from this result the different lives, or life activities, in his organism. There is his physical life, his emotional life, his intellectual life, his animal life, his spiritual life, each of them being essentially different from the other, and as each life is the life of the soul, the life of the soul presents a physical, emotional, animal, intellectual and spiritual aspect, to say nothing about the intermediate links connecting those states with each other. At first in the fœtus in the womb there begins the unfoldment of the energy emanating from the soul as merely vegetative life; after the birth of the child animal life becomes unfolded; this is followed by the development of intellectual life; and ultimately spiritual life (self-consciousness of the spirit) may be attained. At the process of death, the order is reversed. The spirit retires in its own interior, the intellectual faculties cease to manifest their activity, finally the animal life disappears, and there is nothing left but the vegetative and chemical activity that causes the decomposition of the physical form.

This retiring of the soul from exterior to interior

life and the process of what is called "dying," but in which in reality nothing dies but the form, is described by a master of the higher science as follows :

" If the organization of a physical body becomes impaired to such an extent that the principle of life cannot employ it any longer as an instrument for its activity, the organism ceases to act. Death may begin at the head, the heart or the lungs ; but life lingers longest in the head, and it may be active there after the body to all external appearances has become unconscious and ceased to live. The power of thought may continue for a time to work in its habitual manner, although sensation has ceased to exist in the nerves. The activity may even grow in intensity as the principles become disunited, and if the thought of the dying is intensely directed upon an absent friend, it will impress itself upon the consciousness of that person and perhaps cause him to see the apparition of the dying. At last vitality leaves the brain, and the higher principles depart, carrying with them their proper activity, life and consciousness, leaving behind an empty form, a mask, an illusion. There need not necessarily be any loss of consciousness in regard to the persons and things by which we are surrounded ; the only consciousness which necessarily ceases is that which refers to one's personality — physical pain, weight, heat, cold, hunger and thirst — such as may have affected the physical body.

" As life departs from the brain, the principle carrying memory emerges therefrom, and every event of the life which is ebbing away is reviewed by the mind. Picture after picture

presents itself with living vividness before the consciousness, and the person lives in a few minutes his whole life again. Persons in a state of drowning have experienced that state and regained their life. That impression which has been the strongest survives all the rest; the other impressions disappear, to reappear again in the Devachanic state. No man dies unconsciously, whatever external appearances may seem to indicate to the contrary; even a madman will have a moment at the time of his death when his intelligence will be restored. Those who are present at such solemn moments should take care not to disturb, by outbursts of grief or otherwise, that process by which the soul beholds the effects of the past and lays the plans for its future existence.”¹

There are some who will ask that the above shall be proven to them, but it ought to be plain to every would-be scientist, that nothing can be really known to anybody unless he has himself the power to observe and experience it. The processes belonging to the inner life of the soul can be observed and experienced by nothing less than the soul itself, and how can any one be in possession of soul perception, if he is still so little developed as not to be conscious of having a soul?

Seen with the eye of the soul the process of dying is nothing more than a stripping off the clothes of flesh and blood which the soul has worn during its term of

¹ F. Hartmann: *Magic*, Letter from an Adept, p. 178, American edition.

imprisonment and an entering into freedom. To say that a man is dead when he has taken off his coat is as unscientific as it is illogical, for the coat is not the man nor is the man after stripping off his gross physical body a bodyless spirit devoid of substance and form. The birth of the soul-body, which is the death of the outward form, has often been seen and described by persons having the power of psychic perception, and is unanimously declared by them to be a separation of an ethereal (astral) form from the physical body :

“At first I saw a beautiful light of a pale-blue color, in which appeared a small egg-shaped substance about three feet above the head of the dying person. It was not stationary, but swayed to and fro, like a balloon in the air. Gradually it elongated to the length of the body, the whole enveloped in a mist or smoke. I perceived a face corresponding in features to that which was soon to be soulless, only brighter, more smooth, more beautiful; yet unfinished, with the same want of expression that we observe in a new-born infant. With every breath of the dying body the ethereal form was added to, and became more perfect. The body appeared to be enshrouded in a cloud-like mist.”¹

As a matter of course, the ethereal form thus described is not yet the true soul or the *ego*, but merely a higher form of his dwelling, a more ethereal body called the *astral* form, as well adapted to his existence upon

¹ F. Hartmann: *Magic*, p. 179, American edition.

the plane on which the man is to live after leaving his physical body, as his physical body was adapted to life on the physical plane.

As it is not the purpose of this work to enter into an investigation concerning the various states which the soul may enter after leaving the physical body, we will not proceed on this line of a subject which has already been ably discussed in another work,¹ but will discuss the nature of that state of apparent death in which all the appearances of real death are presented.

Apparent death differs from real death, in so far as in a case of apparent death the soul has not yet departed from the body, although the latter presents all the signs of being without life, sensation or consciousness; while in real death the final separation of soul and body has been completed and no revival of the corpse is possible after that.

The state of apparent death can only be due to either one of two causes, namely:

1. The soul has withdrawn its activity from the body and thus left the body without active life. Such takes place in a *trance*.

2. The body, on account of nervous exhaustion, or owing to some state of disorder, has become temporarily incapable of acting according to the impulses which it receives from the soul. This takes place in cases of

¹ See A. Besant : *Death and After*.

paralysis, syncope, lethargy, asphyxia, etc., but especially in what is called *catalepsy*.

Cases of trance, in which the soul voluntarily leaves the body, without entirely breaking its connection with it, have already been described in the first part of this work, where accounts of fakirs buried alive and resurrected are given. The possibility of entering voluntarily into that state of spiritual consciousness in which the body is unconscious, but the soul fully awake, although pool-pooled a few years ago by "science," is nowadays so universally known as to require no further discussion or proof. It has been known in all ages, but is still ignored by some would-be representatives of modern science and ignorant newspaper writers. The following instance is taken from "Lucifer," Vol. XIV, p. 82.

LXXVII.

"I had a tooth out by gas on Monday, and while I was under the influence of the gas, I had the most extraordinary experience. After the first brief period of unconsciousness, I became aware that I was no longer on the physical plane; my body and all other physical objects seemed to have disappeared. In every direction stretched a dark-blue vault, something like the sky on a summer night. I seemed to *have no form*, but round my formless self was a soft white light, which acted as a kind of formless body for me, and from it proceeded what I can only call a luminous 'wire,' which I knew connected me

with my physical body. Close to me, very nearly in contact, was another formless body of this soft white light, just like myself; and it shone with exactly the same intensity. At a considerable distance were other white lights, much less bright than myself and the one near me, stretching away as far as I could see.

“For the time being I could really understand what it was to be formless and yet to retain individuality, and I said to myself: ‘Of course formless beings can exist. How wonderful not to have understood it before. I have been formless like this many times before. I remember it all.’ But I knew that my ability to comprehend the formless state depended upon my being out of the body, and that when I returned to the body again I should, as before, be quite unable to understand such a state.

“Then a voice began to speak. I cannot remember the exact words, but they were something like this: ‘Know that formless beings do exist; and because you have obeyed the Law, and been clothed with a body which is material and dull and which gives great hindrance to things you can now comprehend, never again distrust the great teachings or incline to disbelief in states that are incomprehensible to you in your body.’

“Then I felt impulses along the ‘wire’ connecting me with my body, and I knew I was returning to it. I seemed to descend in a spiral manner into my body, and the process of returning was most unpleasant. I did not *wish* to return, any more than people wish to die, as a rule. My first words when I woke up were, ‘What a dreadful sensation!’ and I was think-

ing of the return, not of the tooth, of which I had felt nothing.

“ With regard to the other white lights I saw, my impression at the time was that those at a distance were permanently detached from the body (*i. e.*, dead), but that I and the bright light near me were only temporarily so.”

For the purpose of entering into a certain stage of trance (this being a state of higher consciousness, higher thought and sensation) which renders the body insensible, it is not even necessary that the body should become unconscious, for the body feels no pain when the soul withdraws from it, and the soul feels no pain when it ceases to identify itself with the body. Instances of such cases are the following ones.

LXXVIII.

Jeanne d'Arc, when burned alive at the stake at Rouen, is said to have emitted terrible cries when the flames were first touching her body; but when in the midst of the fire, she entered into ecstacy and made a public declaration, saying that the “ voices ” in which she had believed all her life had not deceived her, but that she was now with these superior beings.

LXXIX.

Theodorus, a Christian martyr, was tortured continuously for ten consecutive hours by the order of the Emperor Julian; so that the torturers themselves became fatigued and had to be

relieved by others. During all that time Theodorus suffered no pain, but enjoyed ecstatic visions, and he said afterwards, that the only thing that he felt sorry about was the ignorance and brutality of his torturers, for whom he had great commiseration. During the whole time of his torture his mind dwelt upon the glory and happiness of suffering for the sake of the truth, and thus his sensation rested in a sphere in which physical pain does not exist.¹

LXXX.

In 1639 a widow, named Luecken, was horribly tortured at Arnun, being suspected of sorcery. In the midst of the torture she "went to sleep" (became entranced), spoke in several languages and finally appeared to be dead. After the torture was ended, she awoke and remembered nothing of what had been done with her.²

Such instances are not solitary, incredible and never before heard of cases, but they might be multiplied by hundreds, as is known to everybody acquainted with occult and mystical literature or with the history of witchcraft and spiritualism. There is no remedy against a trance, nor is there any such remedy needed, for the soul returns to the body when it is ready to do so, and all we have to do, is not to destroy the body or render the return impossible by injuring the body or establishing conditions which render it impossible for the soul

¹ Horst: *Zauberei*, vi, p. 348.

² *Ibid.*, v, p. 334.

to reanimate it. Thus, if the body of a person in a state of trance is frozen to death upon ice by the undertaker, dissected by the doctors, embalmed, cremated or buried alive, there is little chance for the soul to return, or if it does return, it will be under circumstances appalling and horrible, such as have been described in the preceding chapter.

LXXXI.

On February 26, 1844, a lady died at Dresden. The city physician examined the body and signed the certificate of death. They then deposited her in a cold room, enveloped in a shroud. Two days afterwards the lady, having revived, entered the family room, dressed in her shroud. She recovered in spite of the exposure.¹

LXXXII.

The celebrated actress, Mlle. Rachel, died at Paris, on January 4, 1858. After the process of embalming her body had already begun, she awoke from her trance, but died ten hours afterwards owing to the injuries that had been inflicted upon her.²

LXXXIII.

In May, 1864, a man died very suddenly at a hospital in the State of New York, and as the doctors could not explain the cause of death they resolved upon a *post-mortem exam-*

¹ Kempner, p. 26.

² *Ibid.*, p. 76.

ination, but when they made the first cut with the knife, the supposed dead man jumped up and grasped the doctor's throat. The doctor was terrified and died of apoplexy on the spot, but the "dead" man recovered fully.¹

There is such an abundance of similar cases on record that it is difficult to make a choice in selecting those which are the most interesting. If it is once understood that a human body, while the soul is in a state of trance, requires neither food nor air, and may continue for weeks and months in that state, accounts of people being buried for many days in a coffin, or whose bodies have been for weeks immersed in water, will cease to be astonishing or wonderful, while without the true explanation they necessarily seem incredible.

LXXXIV.

A laborer at Satmala, in Finland, fell into the water and was drowned. His corpse was found some time afterwards and brought to his family, and, after the usual ceremonies were gone through, it was buried. On the second day thereafter the undertaker was engaged at work near that grave, when he heard within it knockings and cries and groans. Becoming scared, he ran away and went home, telling his family of the event. The story soon became noised abroad, and finally the parson with the whole congregation went to the grave and had

¹ Kempner, p. 81.

it opened. The corpse was found with terrible wounds on the head, the arms, shoulders and feet, giving evidence of the terrible struggle he had undergone in his vain attempts to free himself before he really died.¹

Space forbids any further enumeration of cases of this kind, but there seems to be hardly any limit for the time during which a person may remain in a *trance*, for although the soul has retired from the body, if it has not fully broken its connection with it, the remaining life energy will keep the body from undergoing the process of decomposition.

In cases of catalepsy the matter is different. There the soul is ready to manifest its activity in the body, but the body cannot obey, owing to some hindrance in its organic mechanism, or on account of its exhausted nervous power. In such cases the activity of life begins again as soon as the impediment is removed or the nervous energy has recuperated its strength.

LXXXV.

A sailor on board of a ship had his skull broken by a block that fell down from the mast. He was knocked senseless and lay in a state of apparent unconsciousness for three weeks, after which trephining was resorted to and a piece of bone that pressed upon his brain was removed. He immediately returned

¹ Kempner, p. 89.

to consciousness and recovered, finishing a sentence in which he had been interrupted by the accident.¹

This case goes to show that the mind is comparable to the organism of a music-box, which through the mechanism of the brain grinds out thoughts as an organ grinds out music; but as no such organ is known to grind itself without an organ grinder, so behind the thinking faculty of the mind there is the soul that makes use of these faculties for the purpose of thinking and puts its ideas into shape by means of the brain, and expresses these thoughts through the organs of speech. Now there may be a stoppage or paralysis of the brain which prevents the soul (the self) from forming its abstract ideas and emotions into concrete thoughts and expressing them in words, or there may be a paralysis of the organs of speech, rendering it absolutely impossible to express the thoughts evolved by means of the brain; but for all that the soul of man, the self that uses the mind and the brain for doing the thinking, is not dead, but may be fully self-conscious and alive, just as a carpenter is not dead every time he stops planing or lays down his saw, but still retains the faculty of planing and sawing again.

Cases in which the thinking faculty, sensation and perception were fully alive, while the body was totally

¹ Carpenter: *Physiology*.

unable to express its thoughts and sensations, have been already enumerated above. Similar states may be produced by artificial means, such as the injection of curare, poisoning with strychnine, etc. The cessation of a manifestation does not prove that the principle which has manifested itself is dead; the sun does not become annihilated when he becomes hidden from our sight by a cloud or disappears from our view at night. The confusion in such cases arises from confounding the causes with their effects and mistaking effects for their causes. It is true that an orator ceases to exist as soon as he shuts his mouth, that is, he ceases to be manifest as an orator; but for all that he remains a human being, capable of making an oration. In the same way the cessation of all the outward manifestations of life in the body of a man does not prove that the soul which is the source of such manifestations has left the body, when the latter is in a state resembling death. This can be known only to the all-seeing eye of God, and to be able to decide it beyond the possibility of a doubt, our doctors and undertakers would have to be gods or divine beings; while, as is well known, their divinity often leaves very much to be desired, and all they can do is to depend upon external appearances, which are often misleading, as has been shown by the facts cited above.

LXXXVI.

At Festenburg, Prussia, a pregnant woman, the wife of a physician, Dr. Fiebig, apparently died. Two other physicians, one a professor of medicine, were called in and all possible means were taken for the purpose of reviving the body, but in vain. The woman presented all the "indubitable" signs of being dead (excepting of course putrefaction), and the doctors resolved to make the Cæsarean operation for the purpose of attempting to save the child. During that operation the woman awoke, but died soon afterwards on account of the injuries received thereby. Two of these physicians were sentenced to a term of imprisonment.¹

LXXXVII.

The burial of Mrs. Meissner, at Breslau, after she had been officially and scientifically declared undoubtedly dead, was delayed on account of the absence of her husband, a Protestant clergyman. The pastor returned on the fourth day and caused the coffin to be opened, for the purpose of beholding once more the dear remains. He then delivered a sermon to those present, while standing by the side of the open coffin, and during that sermon the apparently dead woman recovered the power of speech. She had heard everything that was said in her presence during the whole time of her state of apparent death, and continually lived in mortal fear of being buried alive.

¹ Kempner, p. 10.

Space forbids a more extended enumeration of such cases, in which the supposed infallibility of "medical science" has proven to be a chimera; but an abundance of such material may be found in the books mentioned in the preceding part of this book.

There are many "lives" or modes of activity in the organism of man, just as there are many "forces" or modes of motion in nature, such as heat, light, electricity, magnetism, chemical affinity, etc., all of them being fundamentally one power in nature, and nevertheless essentially different from each other in the mode of their manifestation. The higher and spiritual life in a man may be entirely dead and inactive,* while his intellectual and physical life may be highly developed. Such a man will appear to be fully alive, and while perhaps very clever will nevertheless be spiritually an idiot, dead to all that is good and great, insensible to all that belongs to the higher aspirations of the soul and the exalted purposes of life, for all of which he has not the least appreciation, being dead to the sense of spiritual beauty, justice, truth, etc., but fully alive to all that belongs to the enjoyment of the external senses and to the intricacies of mental speculation. Or the reverse may take place, and while being alive on the highest planes of spiritual contemplation, even above the region of objective thought, enveloped in the bliss of divine consciousness, his intellect may be inactive and his

body appear as a corpse. In another the emotional life may be intensely active, so as to dominate over all the intellectual faculties, as is the case in emotional insanity; or the intellectual life may be the ruler, so as to keep in abeyance all human feelings and cause the person to be a miserable, intellectual, selfish and cruel tyrant, whose life becomes absorbed in the service of the hypotheses and theories which he has created himself. Thus there are many varieties of conditions in nature, in the inner life of man no less than in his outward circumstances, and it is impracticable to enumerate them all; but the purpose of this book would not be fulfilled completely, if, for fear of the ridicule of the ignorant, we should omit speaking of a certain class of cases in which the usual order of nature seems to be reversed and where the vegetative life of a corpse in the grave is kept active by the exertions made for its sustenance by the animal soul.

The cases referred to are those of so-called *vampires*, which means that corpses which are actually dead, because the true life of the spirit has entirely departed from them, still remain connected with a certain form of animal or "*astral*" consciousness which keeps the body from decomposition and procures for it the means of sustaining its existence.

These vampires are called "*Pisachas*" in India, and are described as the astral bodies of the dead, from

which the soul has departed; they are supposed to be a kind of "shell" or ghost, wandering about or clinging to the living, from whom they extract vitality for the purpose of supplying the corpse in the grave with a kind of artificial life.¹

In Horst's "Library," Vol. I, p. 251 and following pages, and also in Prof. Max Perty's "Mystical Phenomena in Nature," there are many well authenticated accounts of cases of vampires, described in their details and certified to by physicians and officers of the government; but we have only room to give one instance as an illustration of their type.

LXXXVIII.

In the village of Kisolova there died a certain Peter Plogojowitz, and a few days afterwards he was buried with the usual ceremonies of the Roman Catholic church. A few days after the funeral several persons suddenly became sick, and within nine days there died in that village nine persons, some young and some old, after a short illness which exhibited the symptoms of nervous exhaustion. All of these persons most positively declared upon their dying bed, that the ghost of Peter Plogojowitz was the only cause of their death; because he had come to them at night in the shape of a vampire, placed himself upon them and rendered them helpless, and in this state

¹ Detailed accounts of such cases may be found in H. P. Blavatsky's "Isis Unveiled," vol. i, p. 454.

sucked from them their strength. Upon this, the authorities decided to open the grave of that person; which was accordingly done in the presence of the whole village, and the body of Peter Plogojowitz was found without the least sign of decomposition, looking perfectly fresh; but the hair and beard and the nails of the corpse had grown in the grave, while his face, hands and feet, in fact the whole body, looked as healthy as they did when the man was alive. In his mouth some fresh blood was observed, and it was believed to be that of the victims from whom the vampire abstracted it. According to the custom prevalent in such cases, they took the body out of the grave and drove a pointed stake through it, when a great deal of fresh blood began to flow out of the mouth and nose of the corpse. They then burned the corpse.

A discussion of this and similar cases would lead us into the field of metaphysics and occult science, to explore which is not within the purpose of this book; we therefore only give the above case as an example, for what it is worth, adding, however, that the human organism is a mystery which has not yet been solved by modern science, which knows only the grossest of all man's envelopes, namely, his material visible form, and moreover there are many mysteries in nature which appear incredible and wonderful, but whose explanation is very plain and perfectly natural as soon as we understand the laws which govern such phenomena, while without the understanding of these laws an endless array

of facts will lead to nothing but to attract the ridicule of the would-be-wise, and to increase the superstition of the credulous and ignorant. But those who wish to penetrate into these mysteries, and to whom these stories of a life within the grave seem fanciful and improbable, would do well to seek for the solution of these secrets within their own souls, and to learn to realize the fact, that we are all citizens of a higher world, but buried alive in living tombs of matter, where we are vampirizing each other, and that our only hope of resurrection rests in becoming saved by the redeemer within, and being brought into the true and immortal life by the recognition of eternal truth.

THE SIGNS OF DEATH.

There is a popular superstition, prevalent especially among "scientists," according to which, ever since the beginning of the world, medical science has never attained such a high standard as it occupies at present, being, as it is believed, now almost upon the summit of all attainable knowledge. But those who can see a little beyond the narrow limits drawn by modern history, know that the world is moving in cycles, having its ebbs and floods, its ups and downs, and that there has never been an age of more benighted ignorance than the *Kali Yuga* or dark age in which we are living now. The recognition of the Reality has almost become a term without any meaning; we are living in tombs, and the surest sign that we have no real knowledge of anything real is that we have to judge everything by signs and symbols and mere appearances, but do not see that which is real. Enveloped in our shell of illusions we do not see the light of the truth, but merely judge of its nature by means of the shadows produced within our material envelopes and only rarely a faint gleam from above shows through a crack.

The fact is that there probably never was an age in which the Real was so completely lost sight of and so much importance paid to appearances as at this present time. The true nature of Man is becoming unknown and entirely disregarded by "science." There is only one step farther, and men and women in the eyes of science will be only intellectual animals, whose sole object in life will be to procure the means for continuing an animal existence, and procreating their species; for which purpose man's destiny will be to work hard with his hands and woman's employment to make use of her womb. As to the knowledge of any higher or immortal state, this is to be regarded as a superstition, unworthy the attention of a man who believes himself to be a scientist, because he is unable to see beyond the limits of matter, and depends for his knowledge on external proofs; while a higher than the material state and which he is not able to enter, does not exist for him and can therefore not be proven to have any existence for him.

Now it is only in the knowledge of the meaning of certain details of external appearances that some progress has been made by medical science during the last two or three centuries; but in regard to a knowledge of the true nature of man's constitution, the ancient Indians and Egyptians and even the Romans and Greeks knew more than is known at present in our

modern academies. Thus the Egyptians knew of seven principles in the constitution of man, where our modern science knows only of one. The Egyptians called these principles by the following names :

1. *Chu*. The spirit. (In Sanscrit, *Atma*.)
2. *Churb*. The shadow of the spirit, or the heavenly soul. (*Buddhi*.)
3. *Ba*. The soul or the human individuality. (*Manas*.)
4. *Al*. The body of desire. (*Kama rupa*.)
5. *Ka*. The astral body or the personality of man. (*Linga*.)
6. *Nif*. The breath of life. (*Prana*.)
7. *Bas*. The physiological organic activity.

This was the invisible man known to the ancients, and he inhabited a visible material house, built up of flesh, blood and bones, etc., which they called

Chat. The material body.¹

This material body with its physiological functions is the "mar" of whom modern medical science knows ; as to all the rest, it is shrouded in ignorance. All that physical science, judging alone from appearances, can possibly know, is the state and condition of the house in which man lives during his stay upon this planet ; but whether the owner of the house is at home or has gone away ; whether he is asleep or dreaming or fully

¹ F. Hartmann : *Magic*, p. 76, American edition.

awake or temporarily absent — of all this, phenomenal science cannot possibly know anything; the only certain sign that the house has been abandoned permanently is its decomposition and falling to pieces. *The only reliable sign that the body has been permanently deserted by the soul, is when the body becomes putrefied.* The windows may be closed and our raps at the door may elicit no response; we listen and peep through the keyhole, but there is no indication that the inhabitant of the house is at home; even some of the walls may have become dilapidated and fallen into ruins; nevertheless this is not a sure sign that the owner has given up his possession or may not return; the only certain sign is, when the whole dwelling, even its innermost rooms have fallen into such a state of decay as to render its habitation impossible.

“Science” says, “Life is a series of definite and successive changes, both of structure and composition, which take place within an individual without destroying its identity.”¹ In this “science” is totally wrong; for what is thus described as “life,” is not the principle of life itself, but the manifestation of its activity in the physical body. We might with the same right answer the question, “What is heat?” by saying, “Heat is the bubbling of the water boiling in a teakettle,” thus mistaking the effect for the cause and leaving out of con-

¹ Medical Encyclopedia, 1883.

sideration the possibility of an energy existing in a latent state, which, when it becomes active, manifests itself by producing the phenomena which cause the sensation of heat.

Far more rational is the explanation given by the ancients in regard to the nature of Life. Thus, for instance, Théophrastus Paracelsus says: "The house (the form or body) is always dead; but the inhabitant is a living fire" (*Cælum Philosophorum*, Vol. I, p. 386), and in the *Atharva Veda* it is written: "Atma (the spirit) although self-existent and independent of anything, is nevertheless within the interior of the heart; it is the form of consciousness, it is Brahma, it penetrates and fills everything. As by the light of a lamp each thing is seen, and as one does not require another light for the purpose of seeing the light of a lamp, so this Atma is the whole light itself which renders things luminous (living), and each thing is seen in the light originating from Atma."

One medical authority says, "The cessation of the exterior life is no sign that the interior life has been annihilated, and we do not know how soon that annihilation takes place." To this it may be answered that Life (the cause of the activity of life which is called "living") never becomes annihilated, it is only its outward manifestation which under certain circumstances may cease. The spirit or life never dies.

The ancients knew this difference between Life and its visible manifestation, and acted accordingly. Servius informs us that the Romans kept their dead for nine days, and the Greeks watched them for seventeen days, when no signs of putrefaction appeared, and during that time they used certain fumigations for the purpose of facilitating the return of the soul, while in some Christian countries all possible means are taken for the purpose of preventing such a return ; by putting the body on ice or embalming it, with a view of preserving the appearance of the corpse, all of which has no other object but the gratification of a silly vanity of the relatives, and destroys the only certain indication that the person thus treated is really dead. The signs by which modern medical science presumes to judge that the soul has left the body, or as they state it, that "life has become extinct" (!) are the following :

1. The most reliable of all signs is believed to be the cessation of the heart's action.

This cessation may be only apparent, and the fact that the examiner is not able to discover any such action by means of the stethoscope, is no proof that it does not exist. According to Bayer, the heart cannot cease to beat for more than seven seconds without death ; but there have been a sufficient number of cases recorded in the first part of this work that go to show that this assertion is false.

2. Immobility of a needle stuck into the pericardium.

This is a far better means than the stethoscope, for making sure that the heart has ceased to beat; but as stated above this cessation of the activity of the heart is only a sign that the person appears to be dead, but not that the soul has departed.

LXXXIX.

Professor d'Outrepont reports the case of a pregnant woman who apparently died, and in whom the closest examination could discover no heart-beat or pulse; the body was ice cold, all the sphincters were paralyzed, there was not the faintest breath, the eyes were sunken and glazed, the cornea hazy, and there was no reaction upon any kind of irritants. After all efforts to revive the body were tried in vain, the professor resolved to perform the Cæsarean operation in order to save the child. He went home for the purpose of fetching his instruments; but when he returned, the woman began to breathe again, and was soon completely restored.¹

It has not yet been proven by science, that a heart which has ceased to beat, may not begin beating again as long as the separation of the soul from the body has not yet taken place. Brown-Séquard, a well-known surgeon, reports the following case.

¹ Kempner, p. 9.

XC.

A man was hung according to law at 10 A. M. In fourteen minutes after that the heart ceased to beat. At 10.25 the body was cut down. At 11.30, the doctors, Ellis, Clark and Shaw, examined the body and thought that they discovered a light beating of the heart. They opened the thorax, exposed the heart, and saw it pulsate. At noon the pulsation was 40 a minute; at 1.45 there were 5 beats a minute; at 2.45 the motion ceased; at 3.18 there was no longer any irritability, and the man apparently died.¹

By means of the ophthalmoscope the following signs may be seen:

3. Emptiness of the central artery of the retina.
4. Disappearance of the papilla of the optic nerve.

These signs, discoverable only by means of the ophthalmoscope, have long ago ceased to be considered reliable. They, like the rest, could at best only go to indicate that the circulation has come to a standstill; but not that life has departed.

5. Discoloration of the choroid and retina.
6. Interruption of the circulation in the veins of the retina.

As fallible as the above.

7. Emptiness of the capillary vessels. Inability to draw blood from an artery, paleness from a ligature tied around a finger.

¹ Boston Journal of Medicine, July, 1858.

All these signs indicate nothing more than that the circulation has stopped; but not that it cannot begin again.

Kuchinka reports the following case from Prague.

XCI.

In the year 1845, Capt. J. v. D—— died of a nervous disease. The physician opened a blood-vessel, but no blood was obtained. The body was to be buried at the usual time; but one hour before the funeral was to take place, the captain's servant noticed a drop of blood on the wound. He wiped it away, when another drop appeared. The physician was informed of it, and caused the body to be rubbed. In the meantime, the friends of the deceased arrived to attend to the burial, but the blood began to flow freely, and after a while the apparently dead man returned to life. He still lives.¹

8. Corpse-like face.

9. Discoloration of the skin.

10. Loss of transparency of the hands.

These signs are now so well known to be delusive, as to require no further attention.

11. Absence of a red circle around a burn inflicted upon the body.

This merely goes to prove the temporary absence of sensation and circulation.

¹ Kempner, p. 13.

12. Emptiness of the temporal artery.

This only indicates that the heart has lost the power to send the blood to that artery ; but it is no sign that it may not recover its strength.

13. White and livid coloring of the points of the fingers.

An antiquated and perfectly unreliable sign.

14. The lungs absorb no air.

This is the most misleading sign ; because the fact that a person has ceased to breathe occurs in all cases of only apparent death, and is no indication that the soul has departed. Thus, for instance, in every case of drowning it is a self-evident fact that the drowned person has ceased to breathe while under the water, and nevertheless there are thousands of instances in which such persons have breathed and lived again even after a long immersion.

XCII.

M. d' Egly, of the Royal Academy, gives an account of a native of Switzerland, who went to dive into a river, but failed to reappear upon the surface. The place was searched with hooks, and nine hours after the submersion the body was found at the bottom. The priest wanted to bury the body immediately ; but on the instigation of a physician present experiments were made for the purpose of inducing artificial respiration.

Three-quarters of an hour afterwards the man began to breathe, and fully recovered.¹

XCIII.

Kumkel reports a case in which a man in a sunken ship remained at the bottom of the water near a port for two hours, without losing his consciousness for a moment; which means to say that although his body had ceased to breathe, nevertheless his spirit was fully alive, and thus he was even aware of the efforts that were made by the people on the shore for the purpose of saving him.²

15. Absence of sensation and intelligence.

As sensation and intelligence are not the products of the physical body, but the body merely an instrument through which sensation and intelligence may become outwardly manifested, their absence (the absence of the soul) cannot be proved by any physical means whatsoever. All that such signs can possibly indicate is that the body has for the time being ceased to serve as an instrument for the manifestation of sensation and intelligence.

XCIV.

In 1831, a certain Mr. Edward Stapleton died at London of typhus fever. During the progress of his disease certain symp-

¹ Bruhier, i, p. 127.

² *Ibid.*, ii, p. 109.

toms appeared which excited the curiosity of the physicians, who resolved upon a post-mortem examination, to which the friends of the deceased objected. The body was buried in due form and at the appropriate time, but the doctors hired a "resurrectionist," who during the following night dug the body out and deposited it in the dissecting-room. On the following day an incision was made into the abdomen, and as the muscles looked fresh, they made some experiments with a strong battery, which, however, had no other result than to show that some of the muscles had retained a certain irritability. The dissection was about to proceed, when one of the students wanted to try another experiment upon the breast of the corpse. He made an incision into the skin and inserted the wires of the battery. At that moment the "corpse" arose, made a few steps forward and spoke some incomprehensible words, after which he fainted. After a while Mr. Stapleton was brought to life again, and recovered. He said that he had been fully conscious all the time, but unable to give any signs of life; and the words which he had spoken were to the effect to let them know that he was still alive.¹

The cessation of the functions of the brain is no certain sign that the energy which can cause the brain to perform its functions has departed; such a logical deduction would be as unscientific, absurd and ridiculous, as it would be to imagine that the inhabitant of a house could not be at home unless he were continually making a noise.

¹ Kempner, p. 73.

XCV.

Miss M——, fifteen years of age, suffering from cephalalgia, died at Vienna, and the doctors, Malfatti, Capellini and Frank, applied all the tests known to science to assure themselves that she was really dead. Neither ammonia nor any other stimulant had the slightest effect upon the corpse, and electricity produced no muscular contractions whatever. Nevertheless, after twenty-eight hours, Mr. Pfendler, doubting her death, again applied some restoratives, and one and a half hours afterwards the young lady recovered the power of speech, and she soon got well. All along, during her state of apparent death, she had heard all that was said, and repeated some Latin words spoken by Dr. Frank. She had been most terribly afraid of being helplessly buried alive.¹

XCVI.

The Cardinal Donnet, Archbishop of Bordeaux, died in 1826. The physicians examined the body and certified to his death. The bells were rung, and the funeral ceremonies begun. The *De Profundis* was sung, when the cardinal heard the voice of an intimate friend, which caused him to make an almost superhuman effort to give a sign of life, in which he succeeded, and recovered entirely. During all that time he had not been able to see, but heard everything that was said, and lived in terrible fear of being buried alive.²

¹ Bouchut, p. 252.

² Kempner, p. 77.

16. Relaxation of the sphincters and the pupil.
17. Glazed eyes and haziness of the cornea.
18. Insensibility of the eye in regard to the action of a strong light.

All this proves nothing but that a person *appears* to be dead; but it is no indication whatever of the final separation of the soul from the body. While sensation is inactive, there can be no irritability, nor any dilation of the pupil by applying belladonna, etc.

19. Immobility of the body and its members.
20. Falling of the lower jaw.
21. Bending of the thumb towards the palm of the hand.

These signs have been considered as indubitable by some "scientists"; but nowadays nobody believes in them and they deserve no discussion.

22. Cooling of the body down to 22° Centigrade.

Experiments made with animals go to show that a lowering of the internal temperature to 22° renders a re-awakening of the activity of life in an animal body impossible, and the putting upon ice of apparently dead persons may therefore be recommended as a means of killing them and preventing their reanimation.

XCVII.

A woman, thirty-eight years of age, was found frozen to death in a gutter at Troy, and brought to the hospital on

March 3, 1869, at 10 A. M. There was hardly any sign of life and the temperature taken within the vagina was 26° C. Owing to the careful attendance which she received the temperature of her body gradually rose to 36.3° until 4.20 P. M. She was able to leave the hospital on the next day.¹

23. Absence of muscular irritability under the influence of electricity.

Some of the examples given above have already shown that in certain cases electricity failed to revive an apparently dead person, and that such a person nevertheless returned to life. This is easily explainable in cases of trance; for to electrify the house which has been temporarily deserted by its inhabitant, will not force the inhabitant to return.

24. Rigidity of the body. (Rigor mortis.)

This rigidity is often observed in cases of catalepsy, and is not a reliable sign of death. It is especially observable in cases of tetanus.

XCVIII.

A negro in Texas had a scurvy dog whose disgusting appearance was an annoyance to all the neighbors. One of these, with a view of relieving the dog from its misery, poisoned it with a large dose of strychnine. An hour or two afterwards the negro returned home and finding his dog dead and stiff, threw it

¹ Bouchut, p. 312.

over the fence upon a dunghill, where it remained motionless during the night, but on the next morning the dog was as much alive as ever and soon became perfectly well.

XCIX.

In a monastery of Capuchin monks one of the brothers was subject to fits of epilepsy caused by drinking. One of these fits lasted so long that everybody believed the man to be dead. They laid him out in a coffin in his cell and two of the monks were ordered to watch the corpse during the night. They passed away their time in drinking beer and playing cards. During that occupation the beer-jug becoming empty, one of the brothers went down into the cellar for the purpose of obtaining a fresh supply. While he was absent the other monk thought of playing a practical joke upon him upon his return. He therefore took the dead man out of his coffin and stiff as he was, he stood him by the side of the table, while he himself laid down in the coffin in the place of the corpse. Soon the brother returned with the freshly-filled jug of beer and without noticing the exchange went to fill the goblet of the ghost. At that moment the tetanus ceased and the supposed dead monk began to move; but the living monk in the coffin, seeing this and believing him to be a ghost, died out of sheer fright, being stricken by apoplexy.¹

25. Disappearance of the elasticity of the muscles.

This also takes place in dropsy and other diseases, and deserves no discussion.

¹ From a German newspaper.

26. Non-coagulability of the blood.

It has been proposed to withdraw some blood from the heart or from some large blood-vessel, by means of an aspirator, for the purpose of examining whether the liquid thus obtained becomes coagulated; but it has been found that the test is impracticable and unreliable, and that in certain diseases, such as scurvy, the blood drawn from a vein remained incoagulable for several days.

27. Sclerotic spots on the eye.

These spots being caused by the drying of the sclera, their appearance depends upon the state of the atmosphere. Such spots are also often found in living persons, and such a sign of death is altogether unreliable.

28. Exudation of serum upon abraded surfaces.

If by means of friction with some hard substance the skin is abraded in a living person, an exudation of serum takes place. The non-appearance of such an exudation is no sign of death; for when the life becomes temporarily inactive in an apparently dead body, all the other functions are also at a stand-still.

29. Hypostasis, or gravitation of the blood to the most dependent parts of the body, giving rise to discolorations.

Echymoses, or external extravasations of blood are liable to be confounded with hypostasis and these do not always appear.

30. Absence of a humming noise in the auscultation of the finger-points.

If we put the point of our finger into our ear, we hear a humming noise, like the rush of distant waters. This noise is not heard if, instead of a living finger, we insert the finger of a corpse, or a piece of wood. It is evidently caused by the organic activity of life going on in the living body, but as in a state of only apparent death this activity may also be entirely at a stop or at a *minimum*, while on the other hand it may be heard in amputated limbs, for some time after they have been separated from the body, this sign, like the rest, is not fully reliable.

All these signs are of great importance and ought to be carefully observed and taken into consideration. Each of them taken single is no certain sign of death, while the totality of these signs goes to prove not that life has been annihilated ; for there is no annihilation of life ; but that the activity of life has ceased to be manifest in the body, in other words, that the person is *seemingly* without life ; he *appears* to be dead ; for all that is judged by mere appearances can furnish nothing more than an *appearance*, but no positive certainty. All knowledge based upon the external observation of circumstances connected with a truth which is not directly recognized, can be no direct recognition of truth, and therefore no real self-knowledge, but merely

a guess work, never fully reliable, but always subject to doubt.

31. Putrefaction.

Students of occult science know that even putrefaction of the body is not a certain sign that the principle of life and consciousness has entirely departed from the corpse; but that the animal soul, degraded by its intense desire for animal life, may still remain with the decaying remnants of the material envelope which it has loved so well, just as an irrational person may develop a foolish affection for some old, dilapidated object, which is useless except as an object of dotage. This fact, connected with certain mysterious occurrences, such as may be found described in books on occult science, spiritualism, etc., has given rise to a belief in ghouls, vampires and graveyard ghosts, and there may be some truth in what the poet describes in the following verses :

“Born in the sable coffin’s mortal dust,
Engorged and fat with each decaying cell,
I am the king of horror and of lust,
And reign and laugh with devils deep in hell,” etc.¹

To enter deeply into this subject, is not, however, the object of this work, because the rational explanation of the laws according to which such events take place, would require a detailed exposition of the prin-

¹ From an American Journal.

ciples contained in the constitution of man and their inter-relations. It would necessitate an examination into the nature of consciousness and life, all of which subjects belong to the *higher and therefore "occult" science*, in regard to which modern science is still in a state of infancy. But an advanced state of putrefaction is a certain sign that the body cannot assume again the functions of life, and therefore this sign deserves a careful consideration.

Dr. Ferrier says: "After death the tissues undergo changes in color, consistence, etc., by which they are ultimately resolved into their simple elements, included under the general term *putrefaction*. Putrefaction, however, may occur locally during life and general septic changes may occur to some extent before death. The term, however, is not generally applied until the changes are clearly perceptible in alteration of color, consistence and smell. The first external sign is a greenish discoloration of the abdomen; internally, the mucous membrane of the larynx and trachea is the first to exhibit change in color and consistence. The less compact tissues putrefy first; the fibrous tissues resist longer, and the compact tissues of the uterus resist longest of all. In process of time, however, the soft tissues become entirely disintegrated and the skeleton is exposed and gradually falls to pieces.

"Putrefaction is more rapid in air than in water and

least rapid in earth. Under ordinary circumstances and average temperature, signs of putrefaction are clearly visible on the third day after death, commencing with the green hue on the abdomen.

“There is still much to be learned respecting putrefaction, and it is unsafe to lay down dogmatic rules as to how far putrefactive changes shall have advanced at a given time, for even under apparently similar conditions the most extraordinary divergencies have been recorded.”¹

Now that which modern science has still to learn in this respect, is that Life is an indestructible, universal principle, and that all living organisms are made up of the harmonious interaction of many different activities of this one life. The soul, or in other words, the “self,” the individuality of the being, has during its “life” the control over all these various activities of life, and superintends their order; but when the self leaves the body at death, disunion and war occur between these different lives and decomposition takes place. It is with a human organism the same as with a community. As long as law and order rule, the community exists as an organic whole. When anarchism prevails, the community ceases to be a common unity, although the individualities therein do not cease to exist. The prevalence of disorder and disruption of a

¹ Quain's Dictionary of Medicine, 1883.

kingdom is no proof that the king is dead: it merely proves that the king has lost the power to control his subjects. Whether or not he will be able to resume that control will depend upon the amount of dissolution that has taken place. Occult science agrees with physical science, that all organic bodies are made up of everchanging different "lives," but occult science goes a step further and teaches the individual life of the soul, which is the lord of these lower manifestations of life in the physical form.¹

C.

The wife of Professor R., at Rostack, was only buried three weeks after her death, because before that time no signs of putrefaction appeared upon the corpse.²

Dr. P. J. Schneider says that the beginning of putrefaction is not a reliable sign of death; because many cases are known in which the bodies of persons apparently dead have exhibited a great number of bluish spots and emitted an insupportable odor, while such persons came to life again and recovered their health.

CI.

A negro in Texas emitted a terrible odor like a corpse in an advanced state of putrefaction. Nevertheless the negro

¹ See A. Besant: *Death and After* !

² Kempner, p. 2.

seemed apparently well and walked about, but died suddenly a few days after this observation was made.¹

CII.

Mrs. Schmidt, a young woman at Kempen, died of cholera and was put into a coffin, in which she remained for seventy-two hours. Two doctors, Dr. Junker and Dr. Leon, certified to her death. At the hour appointed for the burial her husband arrived and found the corpse of a blue-black color. Believing that it would be dangerous for his life to handle the corpse, he postponed the burial until the following day. On the next morning he approached the body and imagined that he found signs of life in it. He therefore went to the physician and informed him of it, but the doctor laughed at his credulity, telling him, however, to rub the body with vinegar. This was accordingly done, and after an hour the lady returned to life and recovered entirely within a few days.²

Instances of this kind are very numerous; but the above will be sufficient to show that only an advanced stage of general putrefaction is a sure sign that the body may not be reanimated and become again a useful instrument for the external activity of the soul.

This work would be incomplete, if out of fear of the ridicule of the ignorant, we were to omit mentioning another sign, by which many people in the East judge

¹ Observed by the author in 1870.

² Kempner, p. 79.

whether or not the soul has departed from an apparently dead body. We refer to the clairvoyant power attributed to dogs and used by the Parsees for that purpose.

“According to the Parsee scriptures, the soul of a dead person remains within the precincts of this world for three days. In this state it sees before it a picture of its past deeds. If it is the soul of a pious person, it sees a beautiful picture of its deeds in the past life and feels happy and joyful. If it is the soul of a wicked person it sees a horrible picture of its past deeds and shudders and feels unhappy at the sight, and feels at a loss where to go.”¹

Now the object in bringing a dog to look at the dead body, is to judge by the behavior of the dog, whether the soul of the person has already left the physical form or is still remaining with it. It is, of course, impossible to prove the existence of clairvoyant faculties in a dog to a sceptical professor of “science,” because for that purpose the professor would have to be himself in possession of such faculties; otherwise he could not satisfy himself that such powers exist at all; but it is well known that a dog will follow the track of his master for miles, without being guided by anything but what is called “instinct”; but which is nothing else but

¹ J. Jamshedji Mody: *The Funeral Ceremonies of the Parsees*, p. 26.

soul-perception or clairvoyance. Furthermore, the corpses of the Parsees are exposed upon their "towers of silence" and left to be eaten up by vultures, and it is believed that neither a dog nor a vulture, unless driven by great hunger, will touch the body of a human being as long as the person's soul has not departed forever.

It might easily be demonstrated by experiment, whether a dog will show any attachment to his master after the master has been dead for a sufficient length of time to be sure that his soul has departed; but hardly any dog will leave its master as long as the latter is alive, and there are cases known in which a dog has remained for days upon the grave of its master and could not be driven away, and in at least one such case it was shown that the master was buried alive.

CIII.

The postmaster of a village in Moravia "died" in a fit of epilepsy and was buried three days afterwards in due form. He had a little pet dog which showed great affection towards him and after the burial the dog remained upon the man's grave and howled dismally and would not be driven away. Several times the dog was taken home forcibly, but whenever it could escape, it immediately returned. This lasted for a week and became the talk of the village. About a year afterwards that part of the graveyard had to be removed owing to an enlarge-

ment in building the church and consequently the grave of the postmaster was opened, and the body was found in such a state and position as to leave no doubt that he had been buried alive, returned to consciousness and died in the grave. The physician who had signed the certificate of death went insane on that account soon after the discovery was made.¹

There are no facts so real, that those who know nothing about them may not, if they so choose, bring in their doubts and denials; but in the same sense as men and women are only symbols of living powers and qualities existing in nature, likewise facts are of no consequence except as illustrations of the action of natural laws. All possible precautions have been taken to insert in this book only such cases as appear to be well authenticated; but the important question is not whether this or that account is exactly described as it occurred in all its details, but whether its occurrence is in harmony with the action of natural laws or opposed to them, and if we find facts which cannot be easily explained by such laws as are known to everybody, it appears worth while to look a little deeper into the mysteries of nature and pay more attention to what is said about those laws which are called "occult," but which cease to be occult as soon as they become clear to our understanding. If we wish to know the higher laws in nature, that belong to the realms of causes, we

¹ From an Austrian newspaper.

must ourselves grow up higher and enter that realm. There can be no true knowledge where there is no perception. Not merely the effect of the working of a law, but the law itself ought to be seen and its action understood; but how can the action of a law be truly known, if that law itself remains a mystery to our ignorance? The perception of the soul quickly rises to heights to which the intellectual comprehension, based upon scientific imagination evolved from deductions made from the observation of external facts and phenomena, only attains by long and hard climbing; while material science breaks its head for centuries after centuries in vain attempts to prove by deductions and inferences, whether or not man has a spirit, the spirit itself merely opens its eyes and sees that it exists. Phenomenal science hobbles along on her two crutches, called external observation and logic; she always errs unless guided by the light of reason arising from the spiritual perception of truth; but the soul having awakened to a knowledge of its own nature knows itself and all that belongs to the soul. Therefore the true way to study the phenomena of life and death is to learn by one's own introspection, internal observation and meditation the true nature of the life of the soul, which will be found to be a light that can never be extinguished, and whose outward radiations produce what is called the activity of life in the physical form. If this fact,

around which all religion, philosophy and science gravitates, is once realized and understood, we shall then know without any argumentation and by our own experience, that there *is no death of the self*, and that which becomes decomposed is only the garment we wear, and with which we have identified ourselves in our ignorance, thus creating for ourselves an illusion which must be destroyed, so that immortal truth may be known.

THE PREVENTION OF BEING BURIED ALIVE.

THERE is no necessity for describing the horrors of the situation of a person who is conscious of being buried alive. The darkness, the helplessness of the victim, the narrowness of the coffin, which renders even a change of position impossible, the knowledge of being regarded as one dead, shut out forever from humanity and being deserted by one's friends, rendered doubly painful by the knowledge that these friends are mourning the death of one who is living and whom they themselves in their ignorance have condemned to the most cruel fate that can be imagined; while at the same time the ceremonies and "services" performed in honor of the supposed dead appear as a cruel farce, as a satire upon human stupidity and medical ignorance; all this, together with the certainty that there will come no aid, however near it may be, and that there is no hope of escape from suffocation, renders the situation so horrible that even the fate of being burned alive seems far more preferable.

Each of us, even while being born upon this earth, receives the sentence of death, and this sentence will surely be executed sooner or later. Each of us will have to put away after a certain time the body which he received at the time of his birth, and the more he becomes identified with that body and its mental faculties and all the qualities that belong to the mortal "self," the more of him will die with that body. It is therefore not a merely altruistic concern to seek for means of preventing premature burial, but the motive of saving ourselves from the possibility of having to undergo such a torture, ought to be sufficient to induce everybody, even the most egotistic person, to give to this subject his or her careful consideration. We often meet persons who have an exceptional fear of being buried alive, and this can be rationally explained only upon two grounds, namely, either from a spiritual premonition of such an impending fate, or from a spiritual recollection of having had such an experience in some former incarnation; for deep impressions caused by mental agony remain impressed upon the memory of the spirit, even if the newly-formed personality in a succeeding life, not being a partaker of the memory of the soul, does not remember the details of such an event.

The preceding pages of this book have been written to no purpose, if it has not become clear, that all

human judgment, however scientific it may be, is based merely upon appearances and refers to nothing more than appearance. By carefully considering all the above described signs of death, we may arrive at a conviction that a certain person appears to be dead, and we may with a degree of certainty, believe that his soul has departed; but we can truly say that the body is dead, only after the corpse has entered into a state in which its reanimation by the soul has become a self-evident impossibility, and the only reliable sign that this has actually taken place is an advanced state of decomposition, the putrefaction of vital organs, such as the heart and brains. All the other signs are fallible and neither of them taken singly can be relied upon. Least of all is the judgment of jurors to be depended upon, and even the most experienced physicians have been misled by appearances. Whether a doctor commits an error or not in such a case, will depend less upon his learning than upon his possession of good common-sense. Relying upon the assertion of public inspectors of the dead, has often led to the most deplorable consequences, owing to human carelessness and want of judgment. Many a juror, called to certify to a person's death, already takes it for granted that the person is dead, as otherwise he would not have been called, and thus he regards it as a mere matter of form.

CIV.

Not long ago a young man in England died after a long illness. The jury was called in to certify to his death. They went to the bed in which the corpse was lying and seeing that the head of the body was red, they gave their verdict that the man came to his death by apoplexy. At this moment the father of the young man entered and seeing the jury thus occupied, he called to them to stop: "This is my other son," he said, "who is also very sick, but the one who died is in the other bed."

Now what generally takes place when a person dies? However much such a person may have been beloved while he was living, as soon as he is believed to be dead, he is regarded as a nuisance that ought to be removed as quickly as possible. The apparently dead person, who may be in a state of full consciousness, but unable to resist, is dragged from his warm bed or room and placed in a cold room upon a board or straw; perhaps a Bible jammed under his jaw, his head tied up, he is stripped and exposed; scalded with hot water if he is a Jew, and perhaps put upon ice if he happens to be a Christian. Instead of favoring the decomposition of the body, means are taken for preventing the appearance of the only sure signs of death. From an object of love such a person has turned into one of disgust; the house which he may have owned and perhaps still

owns, cannot afford him any shelter against being buried alive, for his heirs wish to have him removed; a person in a state of apparent death, if considered dead, has no longer any right to stay among the living; "science" in the shape of some doctor or undertaker has given her verdict. Down with him into the grave.

In other cases, a person has hardly drawn what is believed to be his last breath, when the medical fraternity like a crowd of vultures fall upon the apparently dead body and slash it to pieces for the noble object of gratifying their scientific curiosity. This is especially deplorable in cases of violent death from accident, murder or suicide, because the medical fraternity knowing nothing whatever of the law of life, do not know that the soul in such cases remains very long with the body, clinging to it by its desire for life, and that sensation has not died, even when it has ceased to manifest itself outwardly; but the astral soul experiences the pain from injuries inflicted upon the body.

The following three cases are from the author's experience:

CV.

In 1883, while I was coroner of Clear Creek Co., Col., and residing at Georgetown, a doctor at Idaho Springs poisoned himself by taking morphine. When the attendants believed him dead they informed the coroner. When I arrived by train

two or three hours afterwards, the body had already been dissected and it was thereby shown that the doctor had died of morphine, a fact which had already been known anyhow.

In 1872, while in New Orleans, La., I received the following communication that claimed to come from a spirit of a girl by the name of Emma Melvina Franklin, said to have been poisoned in Chicago in 1866. As these facts were verified afterwards, there is no reason to say that the description given in that communication could not have been true.

CVI.

“I killed myself. I tried to get away from myself, but I was the same girl still. I descended with my body into the grave and remained with the body until the second day, when I was exhumed and carried to the police. The doctors dissected me, and I felt the dissecting knife ten times worse than if it had cut my living body. I saw the whole transaction, saw the jurors and witnesses, heard them testifying,” etc.¹

¹ In connection with this case we might compare many well-known instances, where persons have felt pains in their limbs that had been amputated and buried. One man had an arm amputated under chloroform and while he was still unconscious, his friends buried the arm. Some time after awaking the patient complained that something hard was pressing against his then amputated hand, and giving him great pain. Finally his friends, without informing the patient about it, dug up the arm and found that a heavy stone had been resting upon the hand. When they returned the patient expressed himself fully and suddenly relieved.

CVII.

In 1872, a German by the name of Scherer, died at a farmhouse in the vicinity of Brenham, Texas. The attendants took away his covering and pillow, crossed his hands over his breast, jammed a Bible under his chin, closed his eyes and put a ten-cent piece upon each eyelid, to keep them down. It was just supper time, and after doing these "services" to the dead, they went into another room for supper. While they were engaged in eating, they heard somebody approach on crutches, and the next minute the supposed dead man walked in on his crutches, took a seat at the table, and after a while, expressing himself tired, hobbled back to his room, where he died the same night.

So strong is the power which an opinion once formed has over a person, that the mind refuses to believe in the possibility of the revival of a body after it has once been officially declared dead, and a person returning to life awakens sentiments of horror. Many a person has paid the penalty of death for having had the misfortune to return to life.

CVIII.

The Count Richard entered one night into a small church and found there a body deposited in an open coffin upon a bier. Just then the supposed corpse revived, and arising from the coffin walked towards the Count. The latter, being

frightened at what he imagined to be a ghost, drew his sword and ran it through the body of the man, who thus died in reality.¹

If the only reliable sign of death is the appearance of an advanced state of putrefaction, it follows logically that the only means of preventing a person from being buried alive is to wait for the appearance of such a state of decomposition before burying the body out of sight. It is true that it is often difficult and generally very disagreeable to keep the body of a person supposed to be dead, for a certain time within a house occupied by the living, but this difficulty is, generally speaking, more fanciful than real; for wherever there has been room for a person while he was sick, there is also room for him when he appears to be dead.

To avoid this difficulty, chambers for keeping the dead until the time prescribed for burial have been erected in all the large cities in all civilized countries in Europe. There the body is put upon a couch with strings attached to its hands, and these strings communicate with bells in the guardian's room, so that if the supposed dead person were to move, his movement would set the bells ringing and attract the attention of the guardian who would come to his aid. This arrangement is very advisable and deserves to be introduced in all places where it has not yet been adopted; but

¹ Bouchut, p. 53.

as there is no specified time for the appearance of putrefaction, no special time ought to be set down for which an apparently dead body may remain in that chamber, but each body ought to be allowed to remain until a sufficient state of putrefaction appears.

Many other means have been proposed for the purpose of preventing a reawakening and consequent death by suffocation or starvation in the coffin or tomb, and among these the most sure and certain remedy would be the cremation of the body in a furnace constructed for that purpose and by means of intensely-heated gas. Even if a person in a state of catalepsy were to be put into such a furnace, his death would be instantaneous and far more preferable to slow death in a grave. But if the old style of burying is resorted to, it would be well to fill the coffin with some irrespirable gas, such, for instance, as carbonic-acid gas, and close the coffin air-tight; for the life of the body only begins when the body begins to breathe, and the lungs having once ceased to act, will not act again unless under the stimulating influence of the oxygen of the air. ¹

The sectarian and other prejudices which exist against cremation are of such an irrational nature that they deserve no serious attention on the part of any

¹ If it were possible to overcome an old custom, we would propose to bury the dead into the earth without any coffin at all, or to fill the coffin with earth, covering the body with a layer of it, so as to prevent re-animation and promote its decomposition and return to its own element.

other than a very superficial reasoner. Not only is putrefaction a process of combustion, the same as cremation, only acting much slower and under circumstances which are painful and disgusting to contemplate; but it was the way in which the first Christians disposed of their dead, and is described in the Bible in various places, such as Jeremiah xxxiv, 5; 1 Samuel xxxi; 11 Chronicles xvi, 14 and xxi, 19; Amos vi, 10, etc. It is also doubtful whether there is nowadays anybody so ignorant as to seriously imagine that the physical and decaying body of a man would have to be preserved for the purpose of being resurrected and glorified; for it is known that there is a corruptible and an incorruptible body (1 Corinth. xv, 53), and "though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day" (11 Corinth. v, 16). The Bible is a book that deals with spiritual realities and not with external scientific illusions, and its allegories are deep truths hidden within forms that like all other forms are necessarily fictitious and symbolical; each of its symbols has a secret meaning, which becomes plain as the mind becomes enlightened by the light of divine truth, but remains forever "occult" to those who can only see the external shell in which the fruit is contained. The true meaning of the doctrine of the resurrection is that as long as man remains in his ignorance he is spiritually dead or asleep and entombed in his

material mind, where he remains for "three days" (past, present and future) until the angel of reason rolls away the rock from his sepulchre, formed of his false opinions, prejudices and superstitions; when the light of truth will dissolve the walls of his dungeon and he himself enter into the state of true freedom, created by the recognition of the soul's own immortality and unlimited existence.

As long as we do not recognize this fact, the Christ, the immortal Self in us, has to carry upon his shoulders the cross of life towards the Mount Calvary, which means the mountains of self-abnegation, self-crucifixion and renouncement of the illusion of self; nor is one lifetime upon this earth sufficient to teach any human being this lesson. Three times Jesus falls down on his way to Calvary, and over and over again has the divine spirit of man to descend into the bonds of personal existence in matter, until by experiencing good and evil, enjoying pleasure and suffering pain, he becomes aware of the hollowness of material life, and realizing the divinity of his own inner nature, he lets that inner nature attain the mastery over his outer nature which constitutes his illusive self.

Thus, even the Christian religion is based upon the recognition of the truth of the soul's re-incarnation, and seen from this point of view, life with all its joys, or death with all its horrors, is merely an illusion and lie.

Neither one of these states affects our true immortal Self; but it is not sufficient to fancy that life and death are not real and that our life is an illusion, as long as we have not risen above this illusion and realized our own immortality, which is not a product of our imagination, but whose true recognition is attained only by the awakening of the immortal spirit in us. While we have not yet attained that state and are still identifying ourselves with our terrestrial nature, it is of importance to us that the enemies of our terrestrial existence should be annihilated and the causes of its sufferings overcome. These enemies are false conceptions covering man's nature, caused by superficial reasoning; and as the worst fate that can befall the soul, is to be entombed in a personality whose nature is impenetrable to spiritual light and life, so the worst fate that can befall the personality is to be buried alive in a state of apparent death. To give an impulse to the study of that higher science, which teaches how either of these two misfortunes may be avoided, has been the purpose of this book.

A PLAN FOR FORMING
ASSOCIATIONS FOR THE PREVENTION OF
THE BURIAL OF PERSONS ALIVE.

Owing to the absence of proper laws relative to the disposal of the dead in most places ; to hastiness of burials during epidemics ; to the uncertainty in the signs of death ; as well as to the existence of certain states that counterfeit the appearances of death very closely, we, the undersigned, believe that there is more danger of the appearances being taken for real death, and of persons being buried alive, than is usually supposed. This, our belief, is based upon scientific demonstrations which show that even the stoppage of the beating of the heart and breathing, for a considerable time with all the other appearances of death, *excepting putrefaction*, do not make it certain, that a person is dead, and that the suspended activity of life may not return after his body has been interred. Therefore, we have associated ourselves together for mutual protection against such a horrible possibility. With this object in view, we earnestly advise our associates to exercise the closest vigilance (particularly with women and children) with regard to the result of the following diseases and conditions, since it is known that they are frequently the cause of a state of seeming death, that may deceive the most experienced : and we hereby mutually

agree to discourage embalming, autopsy, burial or cremation in these cases, until every possible source of doubt is removed, namely, trance ; catalepsy ; syncope ; hysteria ; stroke by lightning ; sunstroke ; anesthesia from chloroform, etc. ; coma in pregnancy ; cold ; asphyxia from various gases, vapors and smoke ; narcotism from opium and other agents ; convulsive maladies ; drowning ; nervous shock from gunshot ; electricity and other injuries ; smothering under snow, earth, grain, or in bed ; strangulation ; epilepsy ; hemorrhages ; suspended animation from excessive emotion, as horror, intense excitement, etc. ; apoplectic seizures ; so-called heart failures ; and all other cases of apparent death that do not show ample evidence of having passed through disease of sufficient duration and severity to cause actual death.

We hold ourselves ready to question cases of alleged sudden death, unless the body has been greatly mutilated, or where some vital organ has been injured ; and in the uncertainty that exists in the signs of completed death, we will refuse to accept as infallible any evidence except decomposition itself.

Furthermore, though death may be admitted by all concerned and interment seriously decided upon, yet, if decomposition has not become unmistakably manifest, we request as a final favor if autopsy or embalming has not been performed, that there shall be placed in the coffin a bottle of chloroform with a leaky stopple, in order to fill it with the vapors sufficient to last a long time ; and this, as well as all other provisions in this agreement, we will to be done for each of us. We would also recommend this practice to others, as a concession to a natural and prevalent dread of premature interments.

Associations for the prevention of premature burials are easily formed privately among relatives and friends, or can be engrafted upon any club or other organization. Public opinion will grow from these, and reforms in burials will follow.

COL. ED. P. VOLLUM,
Med. Dept. U. S. Army.

NOTE. — The above plan for preventing premature burials was prepared by Colonel Edward P. Vollum, Medical Department U. S. Army (retired), and circulated by him in most of the cities in the civilized world, especially in the United States. After long attention to the subject he had become convinced that owing to the reasons expressed in the plan a considerable proportion of the human race had always been buried alive, that such disasters were occurring frequently at the present time and that they would continue to take place, until putrefaction was regarded as the only sign of death, unless an autopsy or embalmment had been performed.





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